

7. Ways to Prevent the Spread of Lice

- Do not use personal items belonging to others, combs, brushes, hats, clothing, etc.
- Avoid hanging hats and coats on the same hanger with other's clothing.
- Learn to recognize lice infestations and check for them on a regular basis.
- Treat promptly when lice are found
- Notify others (school nurse, teacher, friends' parents).

Facts about head lice

- Lice are small crawling insects; they do not jump or fly
- Most lice infestations occur in children 1-12 years old.
- Primary means of transmission is head to head contact
- Secondary means of transmission occurs when sharing hats, combs, clothing, etc.
- Some schools require a "no-nit" policy.
- Head lice require a blood meal every 4-5 hours and die in 1 or 2 days when off the person.

For more information contact:

Shasta Mosquito & Vector Control District

19200 Latona Road
Anderson, CA
(530) 365-3768

shastamosquito.org
contact@shastamosquito.org



7 Steps to Head Lice Control



A Parent's Guide

Head lice continue to be a problem in our community. If your child comes home with head lice, don't panic. Playing with others, a simple exchange of hats, clothing, combs, and other personal items can lead to the transmission of lice from one person to another. Head lice are highly contagious and may be difficult to control. However, you can have your children free of lice by using the following steps to eliminate an infestation and prevent reoccurrence.

1. Inspect

Examine heads: Lice are small insects, about the size of a sesame seed and white or light brown in color. Carefully examine hair and scalp of all family members for lice and their eggs (called nits).

Find Nits: Nits can be easier to locate than lice. They are yellowish-white in color and oval shaped. Nits are glued to the side of the hair shaft and can be found throughout the hair, especially at the back of the neck, behind the ears, and at the top of the head. Use a magnifying glass to help find lice and nits.



2. Treat

You may treat all family members or limit treatment to those found to have lice or nits. Whichever approach is chosen, all treatments should be done at the same time.

Carefully follow all label directions. Individual treatment is a two-step process involving the use of a lice control product and a nit comb. Due to lice resistance, products containing Lindane (Kwell, etc) are no longer recommended. Permethrin (Nix, etc.) is more effective than products with pyrethrins according to the California Department of Health Services.



Use a nit comb: Most lice control products come with a plastic nit comb. Slowly comb all hair to remove nits. For best results all nits must be removed. Nits not removed may turn into crawling lice in 7-10 days.

3. Clean Up Environment

The use of lice control spray is not necessary.

Wash: Launder washable clothing and other items used recently by the infested persons in hot water. Wash bed linens, pillowcases, blankets, scarves, towels, etc. Soak all brushes and combs in hot water for 10 minutes. Dry clean clothing that cannot be machine-washed or hang it in a storage bag for 14 days.

Vacuum: Thoroughly vacuum rugs, upholstered furniture, mattresses, pillows, stuffed toys and other items used recently by the infested persons. Items may be sealed in a plastic bag for 14 days to ensure that no lice survive.

4. Reinspect/Treat as Needed in 7-10 Days

No lice control product will kill 100% of nits (despite label claims). Reinspect for lice and nits on the 10th day after treatment. Re-treat if lice are found or if nits are found closer than ¼ inch from the scalp.

Be sure that label directions were followed closely. If lice reappear within 10 days after treatment, perhaps not all nits were removed. Re-treat with a lice control product and remove nits with a nit comb.

5. Signs of a successful treatment

No lice will be seen and no new nits will be laid. When first laid, nits are attached to hair near the scalp. As the hair grows, they are moved away from the scalp. By 10 days after a successful treatment, no nits will be closer than ¼ inch from scalp.

6. If treatment fails

Be sure that label directions were followed closely. If lice reappear within 10 days after treatment, perhaps not all nits were removed. Re-treat with a lice control product and remove nits with a nit comb.