

Head lice are a common community problem.

Here are some Fast Facts:

- An estimated 6-12 million infestations occur each year among U.S. children 3 to 11 years of age
- Head lice often infest people with good hygiene
- Head lice move by crawling; they cannot jump or fly
- Head lice do not transmit disease, but can spread easily through close head-to-head contact
- It is important to talk to your school nurse, pediatrician, or family physician to learn about treatment options



Size comparison of head lice life stages.
Image: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Head lice: fast facts

“Lice are spread by head-to-head contact and are much harder to get than a cold, the flu, ear infections, pink eye, strep throat or impetigo.”



Image ©naturalchoiceliceremoval.com

What Families Can Do About Lice

Focus on solutions, not on blame.

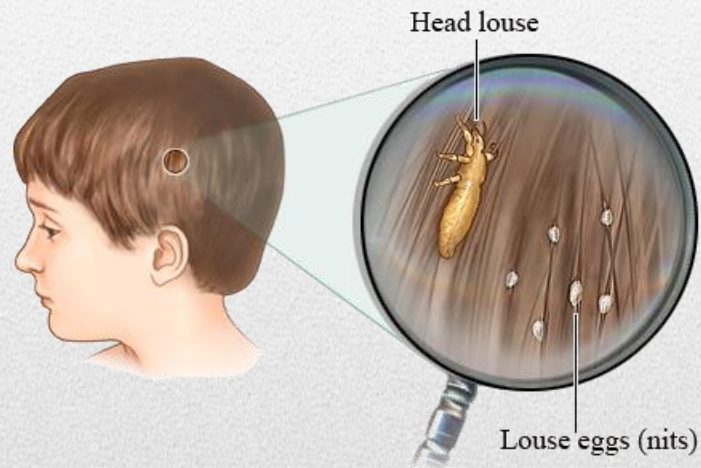
Remember: head lice can be picked up at sleepovers, camp, home, and other places where children share close quarters and come into close contact with someone who already has lice. Be sure to check your child's hair regularly, and especially before and after he/she attends a sleepover or other similar activity.

Stay calm.

Anxiety and guilt can be common reactions to the news that your child has head lice. Be assured that personal hygiene or cleanliness has nothing to do with a child getting lice. The fact is, while lice may be upsetting and a nuisance, they do not spread disease.

Do not self-treat without consulting an expert.

If you think you spot nits but do not see any moving, living lice, consult your child's school nurse or your pediatrician. Do not treat your child with medicated products without confirming that he/she does have head lice.



Head lice and their eggs (nits) can be seen on hair, the nape of the neck, and behind the ears. They can vary in color from white to brown to dark gray. The eggs are tiny round or oval shapes that are tightly attached to the hair near the scalp and do not slide up and down on the hair. The adult louse is about the size of a sesame seed.

Image: HealthWise, Inc.