



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

CDC 24/7: Saving Lives. Protecting People. Saving Money through Prevention.

Head Lice Information for Parents

You should examine your child's head, especially behind the ears and at the nape of the neck, for crawling lice and nits if your child exhibits symptoms of a head lice infestation. If crawling lice or nits are found, all household members should be examined for crawling lice and nits every 2-3 days. Persons with live (crawling) lice or nits within 1/4 inch or less of the scalp should be treated.

More on: [Head Lice Symptoms \(/parasites/lice/head/disease.html\)](/parasites/lice/head/disease.html)

To eliminate head lice successfully, it is very important that all treatment instructions and steps be carefully followed and completed.

CDC does not make recommendations as to what specific product or products should be used to treat individuals. Both over-the-counter and prescription products are available. You may wish to contact your doctor, pharmacist, or health department for additional information about which product they recommend.

More on: [Head Lice Treatment \(/parasites/lice/head/treatment.html\)](/parasites/lice/head/treatment.html)

Children diagnosed with live head lice do not need to be sent home early from school; they can go home at the end of the day, be treated, and return to class after appropriate treatment has begun. Nits may persist after treatment, but successful treatment should kill crawling lice.

Head lice can be a nuisance but they have not been shown to spread disease. Personal hygiene or cleanliness in the home or school has nothing to do with getting head lice.

More on: [Lice Information for Schools \(/parasites/lice/head/schools.html\)](/parasites/lice/head/schools.html)

The informational materials on this website are in the public domain and can be printed for further copying and distribution.

Page last reviewed: November 2, 2010

Page last updated: November 2, 2010

Content source: [Global Health - Division of Parasitic Diseases and Malaria](#)

Notice: Linking to a non-federal site does not constitute an endorsement by HHS, CDC or any of its employees of the sponsors or the information and products presented on the site.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 1600 Clifton Rd. Atlanta, GA 30333, USA
800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636) TTY: (888) 232-6348, New Hours of Operation
8am-8pm ET/Monday-Friday
Closed Holidays - cdcinfo@cdc.gov

