

## **A**ctions to take if your child has head lice:

1. Whether or not you use a chemical treatment, you must remove all eggs (nits) and lice.
2. Work under a good light. Going outdoors or working at a sunny window works well. A bright lamp is helpful.
3. Divide the hair into sections and work on one section at a time. Use hair pins, clips, or elastic bands to fasten off the hair not being worked on. Remove all visible lice and nits before moving on to the next section.
4. Nits can be combed out with a nit removal comb or fingernails. Live lice move quickly and can be “stuck” and removed with cellophane tape. Use good handwashing and clean your nails after working on each head.
5. Check each infested child in this manner each day for at least two weeks until no lice or eggs have been seen for several days. Check regularly (at least weekly) thereafter.
6. Soak combs, brushes, and headbands in lice shampoo or bleach and hot water for 10 minutes.
7. Wash bedding and recently-worn clothing in hot water and dry in a hot dryer for 20 minutes.

## **B**e prepared even if your child does not have head lice:

1. Educate yourself and your child about the problem.
2. Check family members at least once a week for lice and nits. Train yourself to know what your child’s scalp looks like normally so that you will be less likely to confuse dandruff and normal debris with head lice.
3. Provide each family member with his or her own comb and/or brush.
4. Even very small children can do their part. Remind your child to put his/her hat inside the coat sleeve and to make healthy choices about what to share (no sharing of hats, head gear, combs, etc.).



## **C**onsiderations:

1. Support your community’s efforts to control the problem. Teach your child that adults that check his/her head at home and at school are showing they care.
2. Talk to the school about homework if your child misses school.



3. Don’t tease or blame others about head lice. It is such a common problem that you may never know who in the group had it first.
4. People dealing with head lice may be embarrassed. Be careful not to single them out.

### **Housekeeping Tips**

1. Do not use lice sprays. Vacuuming is safer and more effective.
2. Vacuum mattresses, sofas, chairs, and car upholstery and carpet.
3. Place pillows in hot dryer for 20 minutes.
4. Stuffed animals, bedding, or clothes that can’t be washed may be placed in an airtight plastic bag for two weeks.

# "Lousy" Facts



1. Head lice do not care whether people are clean or dirty. Clean people CAN and DO get head lice.
2. Lice are wingless, crawling insects. They CANNOT fly or jump.
3. Lice are small, brownish insects about the size of a sesame seed. They move very quickly. Nits are small, silvery or tan, teardrop-shaped eggs stuck firmly to a single hair.
4. Head lice live about 30 days on humans. Lice live 48-72 hours off the body. It takes 7 to 10 days for a nit to hatch.
5. Lice live on people, not pets.



**There is NO chemical treatment that will kill 100% of all the lice and their eggs. Removal of all eggs (nits), egg casings, and lice is essential to end the life cycle of a louse.**

# Where to get help:

**Kalamazoo County  
Health & Community Services**  
3299 Gull Road, PO Box 42  
Nazareth, Michigan 49074-0042

CD Consultants: 269-373-5264  
Disease Surveillance: 269-373-5267  
E-mail: [epihelp@kalcounty.com](mailto:epihelp@kalcounty.com)



**National Pediculosis Association, Inc.**  
1005 Boylston Street, Suite 343  
Newton, Massachusetts 02461

Phone: 1-800-323-1305, ext 7971  
Fax: 800-235-1305

[www.headlice.org](http://www.headlice.org)

Clinical Services Division  
Communicable Disease Consultants  
269-373-5264 / 269-373-5267

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is committed to equitable, culturally competent  
care to all individuals served, regardless of race,  
sex, color, national origin, religion, height,  
weight, marital status, political affiliation, sexual  
orientation, gender identity, or disability.*

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# Head Lice Control