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What to do if you have head lice?

Information on treating head lice infestation

As of October 2025

Head lice

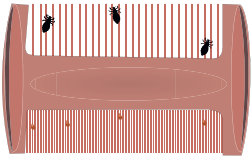
Occurrence and behaviour

- Found worldwide, occur in all seasons
- Live on hairy heads, on clean as well as dirty hair
- Feed on blood, biting the scalp every 2-4 hours, which causes the typical itching
- Can only survive for a few hours without food
- Females stick their eggs (nits) close to the hairline
- Larvae hatch after about 7 days and develop into adult lice
- Transmitted almost exclusively through close head-to-head contact
- Head lice cannot fly or jump, but can crawl quickly
- Rarely transmitted via hats, combs, towels or pillows
- Not transmitted by pets



How to detect an infestation

- Nits are the size of a grain of sand, dark in colour and difficult to comb out, so it is necessary to search the hair carefully.
- Adult lice are about the size of a sesame seed and vary in colour from light grey to reddish.
- Detection of nits less than 1 cm from the scalp or moving lice:
- Moisten the hair with water and treat with conditioner. Comb through systematically strand by strand using a nit comb from the chemist (comb with a narrow tooth spacing of 0.2 mm) and wipe the comb on a piece of kitchen paper to check for lice. Check in particular the temples, neck and behind the ears thoroughly.



Treatment

If live lice are found, treatment must be administered. These lice solutions have been tested in accordance with legal requirements and are available from your chemist (also available on prescription for children under 12 years of age).

| Newer lice solutions with the active ingredient dimeticone, e.g.: | Classic lice solutions |
|---|-------------------------|
| Nyda ® | Infectopedicul ® |
| Jacutin Pedicul Fluid ® | Jacutin Pedicul Spray ® |
| Etopril ® | |

At present, there is no scientific evidence to confirm the effectiveness of other treatments.





Head lice



Appendix 1

– 1. Treatment on day 1 –

Declaration by the child's parents/guardians _____

- ☐ I have examined my child's head and found no lice or lice eggs.
- ☐ I have examined my child's head and found lice or lice eggs.
I have administered an effective treatment in accordance with the instructions.

I have used the following product to treat my child:

I confirm that I will comb through the hair while wet and carry out a **second treatment** on the 8th to 10th day after the initial treatment.



Date

Signature of parents/guardians



Head lice



Appendix 2

– Repeat treatment on day 8 to 10 –

Declaration by the child's parents/guardians _____

- ☐ I have examined my child's head and found no lice or lice eggs.
- ☐ I have examined my child's head and found lice or lice eggs again. I confirm that I have carried out the **necessary repeat treatment**. I will continue to check the head according to the recommended schedule.
- ☐ I confirm that I have administered the **necessary repeat treatment** and have not found any more lice or lice eggs. I will continue to check the head according to the recommended schedule.

I have used the following product to treat my child:



Date

Signature of parents/guardians

Head lice and larvae can be safely eradicated when the treatment is administered correctly, but lice eggs may still develop. With all treatments, a second treatment is essential **after 8–10 days**.

Do not treat infants, pregnant women or breastfeeding women without consulting a doctor first. The same applies to cases of scalp inflammation, allergies and repeated infestations.

Recommended treatment regimen

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| Day 1 | Treat with an effective head lice solution, then comb out with a suitable lice comb after washing out the head lice solution. |
| Day 5 | Comb out while the hair is wet with the aid of conditioner to remove any newly hatched larvae. |
| Day 8 | Repeat treatment with the head lice solution (to kill any newly hatched lice), then comb out while wet after washing out. |
| 9 or 10 | |
| Day 13 | Check by combing out while hair is wet with the aid of conditioner. |
| Day 17 | Check by combing out while hair is wet with the aid of conditioner. |



If there is a high incidence of lice in the environment (nursery, school, etc.), regular checks of the hair by combing with a nit comb every 1-2 days are highly recommended.

Possible mistakes

- Lice solution administered too briefly, too sparingly or too unevenly
- Repeat treatment with lice solution administered too late or not at all
- Even without the typical itching, head lice may still be present.
In the case of a first infestation, it can take 4-6 weeks for itching to occur.

Further measures

- Check all family members repeatedly for head lice
- Inform all contacts in the vicinity
- Clean combs, brushes and hair ties in hot soapy water
- Any headwear, scarves and other items that may have come into contact with head lice should be stored in a plastic bag for 3 days.
Insecticide sprays are not required
- Wash bed linen and underwear at $\geq 60^{\circ}\text{C}$
- **Note: the most important measure for eliminating lice is thorough treatment and inspection of the head. Washing clothes and cleaning are secondary.**

Legal regulation according to Section 34 (5) of the Infection Protection Act

- The infestation must be reported to the community facility (nursery, school, holiday camp, etc.)
- Re-admission to the community facility after the first treatment with a listed lice solution
- The management of the facility must notify the Health Authority
- The management must announce the occurrence of lice in the facility
- A medical certificate is not required. However, those affected and their close contacts must confirm the treatment or eradication of lice in writing (see Appendices 1 and 2)

For further information, please visit:

www.kindergesundheit-info.de

www.bzga.de

Aachen City Region

The City Region Council
A 53 | Health Authority
Trierer Straße 1
52078 Aachen

Telephone + 49 241 5198 5300
E-Mail infektionsschutz@staedteregion-aachen.de
Website staedteregion-aachen.de/gesundheitsamt

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