

Treatment

Over-the-Counter Medication

- Pyrethrin combined with Piperonyl Butoxide
 - Only kills living lice and not the unhatched eggs (nits).
- Permethrin Lotion (1%)
 - Only kills living lice and not the unhatched eggs (nits).

Prescription Medication

Multiple prescription medications are available to treat head lice. Some include Benzyl alcohol lotion (5%), Ivermectin lotion (0.5%), Malathion lotion (0.5%), and Spinosad (0.9%) topical suspension.

Mechanical Removal

Combing with a steel comb preferred. Combing the hair to remove all nits is recommended to get rid of the infestation of head lice completely. Combing should be completed daily until all lice and nits are gone, then continued for 3 weeks.

Alternative Treatments

Shampoos with herbs, oils, or enzymes. Substances such as mayonnaise or olive oil are often applied to the head for 8 hours covered with a shower cap. These treatments work by suffocating the louse and newly hatched nymphs. These methods can be used frequently (every 3-4 days) along with combing. Recommended to those who are pregnant or for children less than 2 years old.



Saginaw County
HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Caring experts, advocates & champions.
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Head Lice



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Did you know...
Lice cannot jump or fly?
Lice can only crawl...

Symptoms

An individual with head lice may be asymptomatic during the initial infestation.

- Itching
- Tickling sensation like something moving within the hair
- Sores on the scalp from scratching

Help Control Lice Infestation:

- Inspect child's head weekly
- Watch for excessive head scratching
- Never share the following
 - Hats
 - Combs
 - Headphones

How to Examine for Head Lice

Use bright light to look at:

- Crown of head
- Bangs
- Behind both ears
- Nape of Neck

How to Inspect

1. Place gloves on your hand
2. Use fingers to separate hair and create a part. The part should allow you to clearly see the person's scalp
3. Look for lice crawling on the scalp where the hair is parted or on the hair shaft. The lice will be dark in color and the size of a poppyseed.
4. Look for nits near hair follicle about ¼ inch from scalp. Nits (eggs) will be white or yellowish-brown. Nits are often more easily seen than lice, especially when the person has dark hair.
5. Also look behind both ears and near the back of the neck. You may see lice or nits. You may also see bites.

Tips for Successful Treatment

- Treat all infected family members. Treat at the same time so no one is reinfected
- Make sure to remove nits
- Wash bedding, clothes, and anything worn within 3 days using hot water and dry in hot dryer
- Vacuum mattress, furniture, carpet and cars
- Seal stuff animals and toys in a plastic bag for 2 weeks at room temperature for 24 hours in below freezing
- Soak combs, brushes and any hair accessories in hot water for 10 minutes
- Notify school, daycare, and neighborhood parents
- Make sure to follow all product directions carefully & use over sink

