

# Balhousie School

# Presentation

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# Head Lice

## Aims

Our aim today is to give you an awareness of identifying and effectively treating head lice and their eggs.

# So....what are head lice?

- Head lice are small, wingless insects that infest the human scalp
- They are the most common of the 3 human lice species
- Head lice infestation is also called

**Pediculosis Capitis**

# Growing



The louse can vary in colour depending on when it fed.

# Feeding

They can live on your scalp for up to one month.



# What causes head lice?

- The head louse, is an ectoparasite that feeds on human blood
- It is 2–3 mm in length and has a flattened, elongated, grey coloured body that becomes reddish after feeding
- The louse clings to the hair shaft by its 6 claws and rapidly moves from hair to hair
- Lice inject anticoagulant saliva into a person's scalp to suck up the blood up to five times a day
- They die within one to two days away from the scalp if they are unable to feed

# What parents should know about head lice

Head lice, though common still make parents, teachers and health care workers uneasy. The good news is that they usually do not cause any serious disease and can be treated easily if you know how to.



# Who gets Head Lice?



School age children are of the highest risk.

Sharing of hair brushes etc are integral to spreading the infestation.



# How do they spread?



They spread through direct contact. They can not jump or fly so rely on direct or indirect head to head contact



Lice can survive for short periods on hairbrushes, clothing bedding etc.



# Spotting head lice

Lice and their eggs “Nits” are visible to the naked eye. Usually it is the nits that are seen as they are static, round and white. You will find them attached to the hair close to the scalp. They like the warm areas of the scalp usually behind the ears and nape areas.



# What are Head lice?

The head louse is an insect that attaches itself to the scalp and feeds off human blood. A louse is tiny, mobile and can be hard to spot especially in thick hair.

Lice lay eggs on the shaft. Its these small white “Nits” that are the first indication of infection.





**Louse egg (nit)**



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# Symptoms



Itching can be a sign of an infestation but sometimes there are no signs.

Some people develop a allergic response to head lice causing inflammation on the neck and scalp.



# Head lice allergies

If you develop an allergic reaction to lice there is a risk of developing a bacterial infection due to over scratching. In these cases you may need antibiotic to treat the infection.

**In extreme cases this can cause  
Impetigo or Dermatitis**



Dermatitis



Impetigo

# If you think you have head lice???

Head lice **NEED** to be treated urgently to stop them spreading. If you find head lice on a member of the family you **MUST** check the rest of the house hold as there is a very high risk they will also have them.



You can ask for advice or available treatments at you local pharmacy.

# Removing lice from the hair

## Step 1

You need to use a treatment from your pharmacy to kill the head lice, this can be shampoo, lotion or an oil.



## Step 2

These treatments only kill the live lice so a nit com should be used also be used to get rid off the eggs. Do this immediately after treatment then again 3-4 days later.



# Removing lice from the hair

## Step 3

Repeat the treatment after 7 days to ensure you catch any louse that may have hatched. Again follow this with the nit comb immediately and then again 3-5 days later then 10-12 days later.



# Removing lice from the home

Lice can not live for more than 48 off the scalp.

You need to wash all bedding, hats, back of sofas or anywhere the head has been in contact with.



Even their favourite cuddly toy.



# Head lice myths

Everyone is at risk of head lice. It is a myth it has to do with hygiene. Head lice have been around for centuries and evidence has been found in Ancient Egyptian tombs.

As long as we remain social beings  
Head lice will remain.



# Protecting against head lice

Unfortunately it is impossible to guard against head lice infestation.

Children have lots of opportunities for head to head contact.

You can advise your child to not share hair brushes etc. If your child has long hair tying it back is a good idea.



**You must check your child's head regularly.**



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