

PEST MANAGEMENT

Head Lice

General Guidelines

- All household members and other close contacts should be checked.
- All infested persons (household members and close contacts) and their bedmates should be treated at the same time.
- To be most effective, retreatment should occur after all eggs have hatched but before new eggs are produced.

Supplemental Measures: Head lice do not survive long if they fall off a person and cannot feed. You don't need to spend a lot of time or money on housecleaning activities. Follow these steps to help avoid re-infestation by lice that have recently fallen off the hair or crawled onto clothing or furniture.

- Machine wash and dry clothing, bed linens, and other items that the infested person wore or used during the 2 days before treatment using the hot water (130°F) laundry cycle and the high heat drying cycle.
- Clothing and items that are not washable can be sealed in a plastic bag and stored for 2 weeks.
- Soak combs and brushes in hot water (at least 130°F) for 5–10 minutes.
- Vacuum the floor and furniture, particularly where the infested person sat or lay.
- Do not use fumigant sprays; they can be toxic if inhaled or absorbed through the skin.

Treat the infested person(s): Requires using an Over-the-counter (OTC) or prescription medication. Follow these treatment steps:

1. Before applying treatment, it may be helpful to remove clothing that can become wet or stained during treatment.
2. Apply lice medicine, also called pediculicide, according to the instructions contained in the box or printed on the label.

WARNING:

Do not use a combination shampoo/conditioner, or conditioner before using lice medicine. Do not re-wash the hair for 1–2 days after the lice medicine is removed.

- Have the infested person put on clean clothing after treatment.
- If a few live lice are still found 8–12 hours after treatment, but are moving more slowly than before, do not retreat. The medicine may take longer to kill all the lice. Comb dead and any remaining live lice out of the hair using a fine-toothed nit comb.
- If, after 8–12 hours of treatment, no dead lice are found and lice seem as active as before, the medicine may not be working.
- Nit (head lice egg) combs, often found in lice medicine packages, should be used to comb nits and lice from the hair shaft.
- After each treatment, checking the hair and combing with a nit comb to remove nits and lice every 2–3 days may decrease the chance of self-reinfestation.
- For some drugs, retreatment is recommended routinely about a week after the first treatment (7–9 days, depending on the drug) and for others only if crawling lice are seen during this period.