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Stop the spread: head lice tips for families

Head lice are tiny insects that live on the scalp and feed on small amounts of blood. They spread easily, especially among school-aged children, through head-to-head contact or by sharing personal items like hats, combs, hairbrushes, or headphones. Although lice are not dangerous and do not carry diseases, they can be very uncomfortable and cause itching, sleep disturbance, and skin irritation from scratching.

Checking your child's scalp regularly, especially behind the ears and at the nape of the neck, can help you catch lice early. If lice or their eggs (nits), safe and effective treatments (like dimethicone or permethrin) can be obtained directly at your local pharmacy. These can be bought over the counter and do not require a prescription. Follow the instructions carefully. Daily use of a fine-toothed lice comb is key to removing nits and lice. Repeat treatment as directed to prevent reinfestation.



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Also, wash bedding, towels, hats, and clothing worn in the past two days in hot water and dry them on high heat. Items that cannot be washed can be sealed in a plastic bag for at least two weeks. Lice can be stressful, but they are treatable.