

How to detect head lice:

Head lice sometimes can make your head feel:

- itchy like something is moving in your hair
- Head lice are passed on through head to head contact and they are not fussy about length of hair or the condition of the hair. Clear hair therefore is no protection although regular washing and brushing is a good way to detect them early.

The only way to be sure someone has head lice is by finding live lice or eggs. You can do this by combing their hair with a special fine-toothed comb (detection comb). You can buy these online or at pharmacies. There is evidence to show that wet combing with conditioner, dry combing, and combing lubricated dry hair (conditioned combing) are more effective and more reliable head lice detection methods than direct visual inspection (by parting the hair).

How to get rid of head lice:

Treat head lice as soon as you spot them. You should check everyone in the house, and treat them on the same day if they have head lice.

There's no need to keep your child off school with head lice.

Use lotion or spray to treat head lice

You can use medicated lotions and sprays that kill head lice in all types of hair, including afro hair. You can buy these from pharmacies, supermarkets or online.

Head lice should die within a day. Lotions and sprays come with a comb to remove dead lice and eggs.

Some treatments need to be repeated after a week to kill any newlyhatched lice. Check the pack to see whether they're okay for you or your child to use and how long they should be left in the hair.

If lotions or sprays don't work, speak to your pharmacist about other treatments.

Some treatments aren't recommended because they're unlikely to work:

products containing permethrin head lice "repellents" electric head lice combs tree and plant oil treatments, such as tea tree oil, eucalyptus oil, and lavender oil herbal remedies

- **How to get rid of head lice via combing:**

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- You can buy a special fine-toothed comb (detection comb) online or from
- pharmacies to remove head lice and nits.
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Follow the instructions on the pack, but generally you:

- use the comb on wet or dry hair, although it usually works best on wet hair with conditioner

- Draw the comb down from the roots to the ends of the hair with every stroke, and check the comb for lice each time — remove lice by wiping the comb with tissue paper or rinsing it.

- Work through the hair, section by section, so that the whole head of hair is combed through.
- Do this at least twice to help ensure you haven't missed any areas, until no more lice are found.
- Repeat every few days for 2 weeks

You can't prevent head lice

There's nothing you can do to prevent head lice. You can reduce the risk of lice spreading by avoiding head-to-head contact.

Don't use medicated lotions and sprays to prevent head lice. This can irritate the scalp.

There's no need for children to stay off school, or to wash laundry on a hot wash.

