

# Once a week take a peek

The national parents campaign to beat school bug bullies

**AN EASY-TO-USE  
GUIDE FOR PARENTS  
TO FIGHT BACK  
AGAINST HEAD LICE**



Produced by:

**Hedrin**

In association with:

Medical Entomology Centre

# Head Lice – Together We Can Fight Them!

Head lice are a normal part of childhood - surveys among primary school children have found that nearly 1 in 10 have head lice at any one time.

If you're a parent you probably know what a hassle it is to treat head lice and just how frustrating it can be when your

child comes home scratching their head yet again. But parents, you've got the power to stop head lice in their tracks!

By following a simple three step process, Check-Treat-Complete, you can fight back against these bug bullies.

## The Impact of Lice

Anyone can get head lice although they are most common amongst children aged 4-11 who spend more time in close contact with friends and siblings. The best known symptom is itching but this is not the best indicator as many people may not itch with lice at all. Leaving lice untreated can lead to a loss of self esteem and confidence and a general feeling of being unwell.

### MYTH:

Only dirty children get head lice

### FACT:

Having head lice has nothing to do with personal hygiene

### NIT KNOWLEDGE:

1 in 4 parents believe schools check for lice -

**WRONG!**



# CHECK

You should check your children's hair regularly, ideally once a week – a good way to remember this is **ONCE A WEEK, TAKE A PEEK**



## How Do You Find Head Lice?

To diagnose a case of head lice you need to find them alive. This is when you need to use a treatment. They move fast and are small – so they can be hard to find!

## Sizing Up Head Lice

Head lice range in size from a full stop to a sesame seed.



Actual size in stages of growth.



### Where to Peek

- Close to the scalp
- Behind the ears
- The back of the neck
- The top of the head
- Under the fringe

### What to Peek for

- Adult lice are 2-4 mm long  
Immature lice are even smaller
- Live lice remain close to the scalp
- Nits are dead or empty egg shells - simply remove these by hand or by combing

## How to Check

- Checking for head lice shouldn't be considered a big deal, it is just a normal part of a family's personal hygiene routine like brushing teeth or washing hair
- It is best to check for head lice using a comb made for the purpose, ideally white so they can be easily seen and with teeth no more than 0.3mm apart in order to trap head lice
- Combing through the hair when wet, or after applying a conditioner, may make the process more comfortable
- Good lighting is important and so is comfort

**CHECK...**  
If head lice are spotted, take a close look at all the family, including yourself, and ask close family and friends to check as well  
**Consult a pharmacist for treatment advice**

### Advertisement

The Hedrin Head Lice Detection Comb is ideal for effective checking.



# TREAT

If you find live lice, firstly, don't worry. Head lice are a normal part of life and are nothing to be embarrassed, panicked or ashamed about.

## How to get rid of head lice?

There are **FOUR** types of head lice treatment:

- Non-pesticide treatments
- Pesticide lotions and liquids
- Wet combing with conditioner
- Alternative treatments

**NON-PESTICIDE** treatments work in a different way from conventional pesticide treatments. They kill the lice by coating and either stripping away their waxy coating, causing them to dehydrate or blocking the opening to their air tubes, disrupting their ability to manage water. These physical mode of actions mean there is theoretically no chance for the lice to build up a resistance. There are three main active ingredients currently in use, dimeticone, isopropyl and activdiol.

**PESTICIDE** based treatments have been around for many years but there is now evidence that head lice already have, and continue to, develop resistance to some of them. There are two main types which work by poisoning the lice but evidence suggests that levels of resistance to these treatments are rising.

**WET COMBING** removes lice and nits but does take time and patience to ensure a thorough job is done. It's quite easy to miss a few and needs to be done twice a week for at least two weeks.

**ALTERNATIVE TREATMENTS** and herbal options are available – although their effectiveness varies.

Go to your local pharmacy for information and advice on which treatment is right for you.

## Applying treatment

- Treatment should only be applied if a living, moving louse is found – never 'just in case'
- When applying treatment, cover the full length of hair and ensure treatment is left on for the recommended time – following on-pack instructions carefully
- Keep lotion out of eyes and off the face – do not use the hair dryer and keep away from flames, stoves, cigarettes and other sources of heat



# COMPLETE

The treatment has been applied but there is one final step, it is time to repeat the checking process.

- Check your child's hair a couple of days after treatment to ensure that all the headlice have been killed
- If the pack instructions specify that a second application is required, repeat the treatment for a second time seven days after the first to kill lice that may have hatched from the eggs during that time
- Continue to check for head lice on a regular, weekly basis – **ONCE A WEEK, TAKE A PEEK**

## If the problem won't go away

If you still find live lice after you finish the treatment either it's failed or there has been a re-infestation. If the treatment failed you'll usually find lice of all life stages but a re-infestation will usually consist of a few adult lice. You'll need to treat again so make sure:

- You read the instructions carefully and follow them exactly
- You use enough treatment to cover the whole head and full length of hair
- You leave the treatment on for long enough
- You complete the treatment course
- If you're using a pesticide change to a different type of treatment
- You use a good quality comb if you're using the 'Bug Busting' method

To avoid inappropriate use of head lice treatments, it is worth considering whether there is in fact a true current infection. In some cases, an itchy scalp can be due to other skin problems such as eczema or other conditions such as dandruff can be mistaken for head lice. Care must be taken to accurately identify live lice and treatments should only be used when this is definitely the case. Speak to your healthcare professional if you are unsure.

## Your Home is a Nit Free Zone

Head lice do not live away from the head. There's no fear of lice spreading to clothes, furniture or bedding so excessive cleaning is not needed. If live lice are found on one member of your family, simply check everyone's hair and then treat as necessary.

## Should Your Child Stay Home?

If your children are checked for head lice on a weekly basis and treated straight away when live lice are found then they can attend school, child care and all other activities just as usual. But remind them to avoid head-to-head contact with other children until all the lice are gone.

Advertisement

## THERE IS A REASON WHY HEDRIN IS THE NO.1 SELLING HEAD LICE BRAND<sup>1</sup>



### Reassurance

**Hedrin 4% Lotion**  
The Original Hedrin product  
Contains dimeticone -  
always read the label



### Speed

**Hedrin Once**  
A fast acting solution  
that takes only 15  
minutes to work



### Convenience

**Hedrin Treat & Go**  
A fuss-free solution great  
for children that just want  
to get out and play

### ALL HEDRIN BRANDED TREATMENTS:

- Are shown to be effective in clinical trials
- Have physical modes of action to which lice cannot develop resistance
- Do not require laborious combing in order to work
- Are skin-friendly
- Have no unpleasant odours and contain no known asthma triggers



# All it takes is three simple steps:

## CHECK

- Your child's hair once a week
- Use a proper detection comb to trap head lice, preferably white in colour so they can easily be seen
- If you find live lice, consult a pharmacist for treatment advice
- If head lice are spotted, take a close look at all the family, including yourself, and ask close family and friends to check as well

## TREAT

- Only treat if live lice are identified
- Use a clinically proven treatment, ideally with a physical mode of action to which lice are very unlikely to build up resistance
- Leave the treatment on for the recommended time for maximum effect – leaving it on for longer will not make it more effective

## COMPLETE

- Check that all head lice have gone within 2-3 days of the final application to complete the treatment
- If the pack instructions specify that a second application is required, repeat the treatment for a second time seven days after the first to kill any lice that may hatch from eggs during that time
- Continue to check for head lice on a regular, weekly basis

**If you find live lice tell your school, friends and family straight away so they can check as well.**



## What to do Next

*"We can fight the spread of head lice but we need to work together."*

- ✓ Ask your school to get involved with the 'Once a Week, Take a Peek' campaign
- ✓ Tell your friends and family about the campaign
- ✓ Go to the web site below for copies of this leaflet as well as further information and sources of help:

[www.onceaweektakeapeek.com](http://www.onceaweektakeapeek.com)

So just remember:  
**Once a Week,  
Take a Peek!**

**Hedrin**

Medical Entomology Centre