

# **It's National Head Lice Awareness Month!**

The only way to be sure someone has head lice is by finding live lice!

## **How to get rid of head lice**

Treat head lice as soon as you spot them.

Check everyone in the house and start treating anyone who has head lice on the same day.

(There's no need to keep your child off school if they have head lice.)

## **Wet combing** - <https://youtu.be/YXVYIDB7pAg>

Lice and nits can be removed by wet combing. You should try this method first. You can buy a special fine-toothed comb (detection comb) online or from pharmacies to remove head lice and nits.

There may be instructions on the pack, but usually you:

- wash hair with ordinary shampoo
- apply lots of conditioner (any conditioner will do)
- comb the whole head of hair, from the roots to the ends

Do wet combing on days 1, 5, 9 and 13 to catch any newly hatched head lice. Check again that everyone's hair is free of lice on day 17.

## **Medicated lotions and sprays**

Ask a pharmacist for advice if you have tried wet combing for 17 days, but your child still has live head lice. They may recommend using medicated lotions and sprays. These kill head lice in all types of hair and you can buy them from pharmacies.

If you have tried the above and your child still has head lice – please speak to the school nurse (via your child's school) who can offer advice and support.

## **You cannot prevent head lice!**

There's nothing you can do to prevent head lice.

You can help stop them spreading by wet or dry combing regularly to catch them early.

Do not use medicated lotions and sprays to prevent head lice. They can irritate the scalp.

There's no need for children to stay off school or to wash laundry on a hot wash. Some treatments are not recommended because they're unlikely to work.

For further information on head lice and nits please view the following:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/head-lice-and-nits>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/head-lice-pediculosis>