



Head lice are small parasitic insects

- Head lice are about the size of a sesame seed and live on the human scalp, which is the only place they can survive. They are brownish, tan or gray in color and move by crawling.
- Lice do not jump or fly, and do not transmit diseases. They feed on human blood, and without it, they will not survive for more than two days.
- Lice eggs appear as tiny yellow, brown or tan dots. Lice lay eggs on hair shafts close to the scalp. Once hatched, the eggshells, called nits, usually remain glued to the hair shaft.

Persistent itching of the scalp is the most common symptom of lice¹

- Scratching behind the ears or the back of the neck is another possible sign.
- Itching is not always present.

Pediculosis (lice infestation) is a very common condition

- There are between 6 and 12 million cases of head lice each year.²
- Head lice are the second most common condition among children – second only to the common cold.³
- About 80 percent of schools across the country have at least one documented outbreak of head lice per year.⁴

Anyone can get head lice

- Pre-school and elementary aged children (those aged 3 to 12) are most commonly infested,² girls more frequently than boys.
- A lice infestation is not due to poor hygiene. In fact, lice prefer to live on clean heads.

Head lice spread easily by direct contact

- Head lice can be spread whenever there is direct contact between the head or hair with an infested individual.
- Lice can also be spread through the sharing of personal articles like hats, towels, brushes, helmets and hair ties.
- There is also a possibility of spreading head lice via a pillow, headrest or similar items.
- Humans cannot get head lice from pets.

For more information, visit www.LiceMD.com

1. The American Academy of Pediatrics. "Head Lice: Every Parent's Concern." March 2007. http://www.aap.org/publiced/BR_Lice.htm

2. Frankowski, Barbara L., et al. "The American Academy of Pediatrics. Clinical Report: Head Lice" Pediatrics. Sept, 2007. 110:638-43. <http://aappolicy.aappublications.org/cgi/reprint/pediatrics;110/3/638.pdf>

3. Amato, Jennifer. "Livingston Students Sent Home Due to Lice." The Sentinel. Dec., 2007. <http://nbs.gmnews.com/news/2006/1207/Schools/006.html>

4. Weekend America Public Radio. "Lice!" Nov. 2006. Available at <http://weekendamerica.publicradio.org/display/web/2006/11/04/lice/>