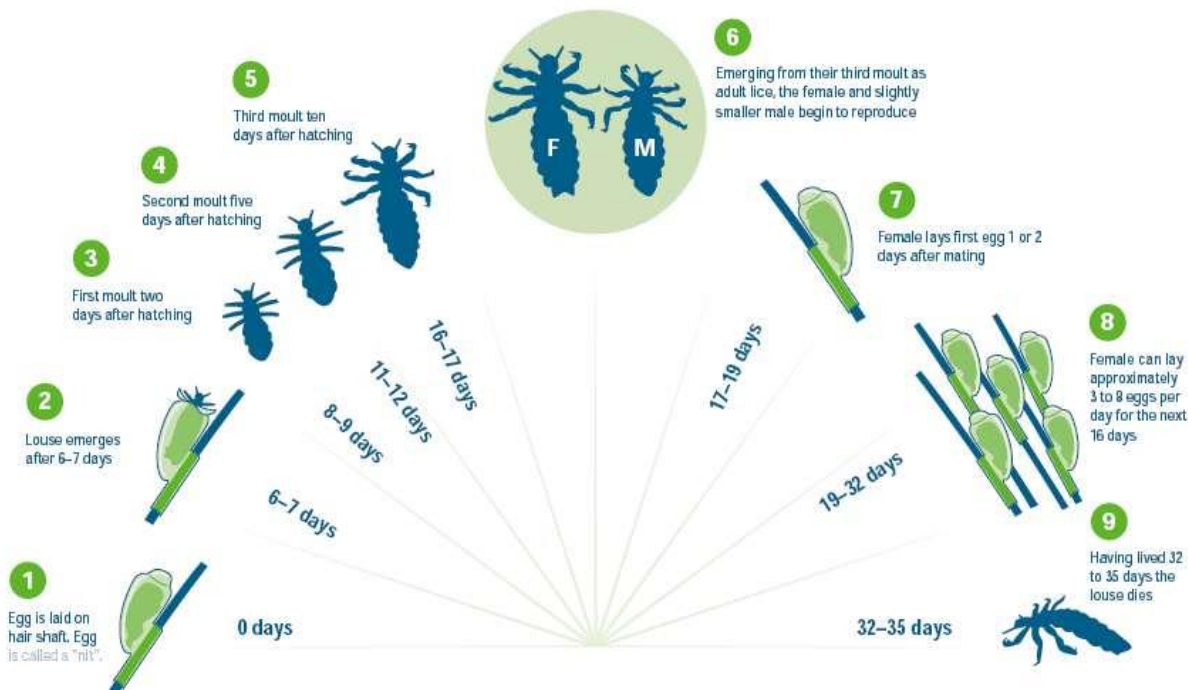


## HEADLICE:



### How Should People Confirm That They Have Head Lice?

- Wet combing is recommended by the Department of Health and Public Health England as the most effective way of detecting head lice and as a way of treating mild head lice conditions
- **Use detection combing** (systematic combing of wet or dry hair with a detection comb) to confirm the presence of lice.
- [Wet combing](#) takes 5–15 minutes per head; lice are immobilized by hair conditioner, so are easy to see on the comb.
- [Dry combing](#) takes 3–5 minutes per head. Using a comb on dry hair may produce static; when a louse is spotted on the comb, placing a thumb on it before drawing the comb out of the hair prevents the louse being flicked off the comb by static.
- Lice found using detection combing at home can be attached to sticky tape to aid diagnosis.
- All members of the household should also be checked.

**Only make a diagnosis of active head lice infestation if a live head louse is found.**

### **To perform wet combing using a detection comb and method:**

- Wash the hair using an ordinary shampoo.
- Apply ample hair conditioner (to aid straightening and untangling hair).
- Straighten and untangle the wet hair using a wide-toothed comb.
- Once the comb moves freely through the hair without dragging, switch to a detection comb.
- Make sure the teeth of the detection comb slot into the hair at the roots, with the deeply bevelled edge lightly touching the scalp, and draw the comb down to the ends of the hair with every stroke.
- Check the detection comb for lice after each stroke, and remove them by wiping or rinsing the comb.

- Work through the hair section by section, so that the whole head of hair is combed through.
- Rinse out the conditioner.
- Repeat the combing procedure in the wet hair to check for any lice that might have been missed the first time.

### Chemical Treatment of Head Lice

- Don't treat unless you are sure you have found a living, moving louse. **Never** use head louse lotions on your family "just in case". It's never a good idea to use chemicals if they aren't really needed.
- **If you are sure you have found a living louse:**
- Check the heads of all the people in your home.
- Only treat those who have living, moving lice.
- Treat them all at the same time with a head lice lotion (not shampoo).
- Ask your local pharmacist, school nurse, health visitor or family doctor which lotion to use and how long to leave it on.
- Always follow manufacturer's instructions when applying a lotion.
- Put the lotion on to **dry** hair.
- Use the lotion in a well ventilated room or in the open air.
- Part the hair near the top of the head, put a few drops on to the scalp and rub it in.
- Part the hair a bit further down the scalp and do the same again. Do this over and over again until the whole scalp is wet.
- With long hair you don't need to apply lotion down any further than where you would put a ponytail band (except when applying Dimeticone which should fully cover hair).
- Use enough lotion – at least one small bottle for each head and more if the hair is thick. Use all the lotion up.
- Keep the lotion out of the eyes and off the face. One way is to hold a cloth over the face.
- Let the lotion dry on the hair. Some lotions can catch fire, so keep well away from flames, cigarettes, stoves and other sources of heat. Don't use a hair dryer.
- **Repeat the treatment in seven days' time** for all of those receiving the first treatment.
- Check all the heads a day or two after the second treatment. If you still find living, moving lice, ask your local pharmacist, health visitor, school nurse or family doctor for advice