

Follow these instructions to perfect your wet combing technique

- You will need a fine toothed head lice comb (there are many different versions available choose one which suits your purse strings. Although your GP may be able to prescribe one)
- Wash and condition the hair as already described
- Have a large bowl of warm water handy so you are able to rinse the comb between each stroke, or a towel / kitchen roll to wipe of the live lice and nits
- Ask the child to sit in front of you either on a chair or the floor, which ever is more comfortable for you and your child

Helpful tip!

Put on a DVD to keep your child occupied while you comb

- Divide long or thick hair in to sections
- Start by combing the section of hair at the back in the nape of the neck
- Slide the comb in as close to the hair root as possible. Then using one long stroke drag the comb to the hair tip

- Rinse the comb in the water or wipe on the towel between each stroke, making sure you remove all the live lice
- Repeat this action until you have combed through all of the hair

Wet combing should be repeated every three to four days for a fortnight or until no more live lice are being detected.

It is important to check for young lice and eggs, if any of these are missed the infestation will continue.



If you are at all worried about head lice or you need more advice on how to cope, contact your GP, or your school nurse on one of the following number.

0300 333 5353
publichealthnursing.torbay@nhs.net



HEAD LICE GOING GOING



GONE!

**A guide to treatments which
will help you to clear your
child's hair of head lice**

Torbay and South Devon Health Care Trust



About head lice

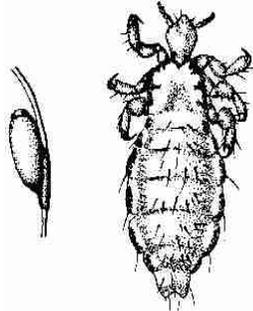
Head lice are a common problem. Anyone can catch them it doesn't matter if your hair is long or short, clean or dirty, brown or blonde. Although it does tend to be most common among children aged between 7-11.

Head lice are purely a human parasite they will not infect any of your pets including dogs and cats.



What head lice and nits look like

Nits are the empty or dead egg cases. New eggs can be detected very close to the root as the adult louse glues the egg as close to the scalp as possible. Then as the hair grows and the eggs hatch the empty egg cases are left behind. Young lice are the size of a full stop and adult lice approximately the size of a sesame seed. A female can live for about a month, laying 6 eggs every day. That's about 180 eggs a month.



How to spot head lice

It is advisable to check all members of your family at least once a week especially if you have school-age children. Lice hang on tight to the hair, usually close to the scalp where there is warmth and food.

1. Wash the hair using ordinary shampoo, rinse, then rub in a small amount of conditioner **do not** rinse out, then use a normal comb to straighten and untangle the hair
2. Now using a detector comb, comb through the hair from root to tip in one stroke. Check the comb for lice after each stroke. Pay particular attention to behind the ears and the nape of the neck
3. Dispose of any live lice found after each stroke

If you find lice, **don't panic** .

Helpful tip!

For long or thick hair divide hair into sections, use clips or slides to help.

Head lice cannot fly, jump or swim. They only spread by clambering or walking from head to head.

Treatment

There are four different types of treatment. Choose one that suits you.

1. Pesticide lotions
These kill lice, but some lice are now resistant to their effects .
It is important not to treat your family with these pesticides "just in case" as over use may cause scalp irritations. Some lotions cannot be used on babies under 1 year or children with asthma
 2. Non-pesticide lotions
These also kill lice however, they have no resistant problems and can be used as often as necessary. You may have to leave it on the hair overnight.
- With both of the lotion treatments it is vital that you follow the instructions on the packet. For more advice on lotions speak to your pharmacist.
3. Alternative treatments
There are a large range of herbal treatments, but these have not been proven to be very effective.
 4. Wet combing
This can be extremely effective when done correctly, and is the preferred method and the only method recommended by the Torbay school nurse team