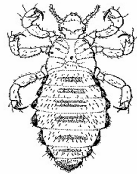
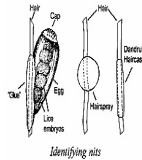


## What are head lice?

- Head lice are tiny insects that live on the hair and scalp of human heads. They lay eggs called nits.
- They only require a human host to suck blood from in order to survive.
- Lice do not care if you are female or male, young or old, rich or poor, clean or dirty, or what season it is.
- Remember, most often the only symptoms seen are itching and scratching.
- Lice do not cause or transmit disease, though scratching may lead to infection.



Adult



Nit

(not actual size)

## How do you get head lice?

- Head lice are transferred by **direct** head to head contact with an infested person.
- You **cannot get lice from**: family pets, dogs, cats, trees, grass or toilet seats. Lice do not have wings so they cannot fly. Lice cannot jump. A slight breeze cannot blow lice from one person's head to another.
- You **can get lice from**:
  - sharing combs or brushes with a person who has lice.
  - sharing bedding, clothing, towels, hats, stuffed toys and pillows with a person who has lice.
  - making head to head contact with a person who has lice.

**Check for head lice  
once a week!**

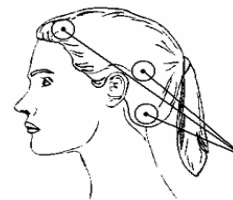
## How to Prevent The Spread of Head Lice

- Check your child's head regularly:
  - once a week as part of your routine
  - every day during lice outbreaks at school
  - if your child has been in contact with someone who has lice, check your child's head carefully.
- Keep long hair tied back or braided.
- Teach your child not to share personal items that are used on their head, such as brushes, combs, barrettes, head bands, elastics, towels, hats and scarves.
- Teach your child to put their hats and scarves in their coat sleeves or backpacks when they take them off at school.

Head lice spread easily, so if one person in the household has lice be sure to **check everyone** in the household on the same day.

## What to look for?

- Itching may or may not be present.
- Lice move quickly and are hard to see, especially when they are newly hatched.
- Unlike dandruff, nits do not move. They are stuck to the strands of hair close to the scalp, usually around the ears, forehead and nape of neck.



- Use good lighting (window or bright light). Start from one side of the head to the other, sectioning hair. Look for small whitish or brownish nits about the size of a pinhead. Adult lice range from 2 to 4 mm.

## Where to go for additional help or information:

- Please consult the brochure on “How to Treat Head Lice”.
- Please call your family physician, local pharmacy, or child’s school.
- Please visit the following websites:

### **Canadian Pediatric Society:**

<http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/whensick/HeadLice.htm>

### **Motherisk, The Hospital for Sick Children:**

<http://www.motherisk.org/women/drugs.jsp>

**Pollack, R.J., Harvard School of Public health:** [www.hsph.harvard.edu/headlice.html](http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/headlice.html)

### **Centre for Disease Control and Prevention:**

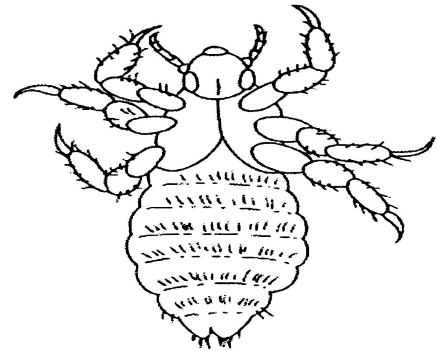
<http://www.dpd.cdc.gov/dpdx/HTML/HeadLice.htm>

**Information provided  
By  
Kingston Head Lice  
Community Coalition**

*“Working together to develop  
and share information*

If you are interested in joining the Kingston Head Lice Community Coalition to share information about this important topic, please call Kingston Community Health Centres at 613-542-2949 or e-mail [info@kchc.ca](mailto:info@kchc.ca)

## *How to Identify and Prevent Head Lice*



(Not actual size)

**Spending 5 minutes a week  
checking your family  
could help prevent  
head lice  
from being spread!**

**Catch it Early!**

**Kingston Head Lice  
Community Coalition  
does not endorse  
any product or service.**

Revised May 5, 2009