



# LICE 101 : Everything You Really Didn't Want to Know About Lice!



MYTH	TRUTH
Lice are easy to get.	Lice are spread only by head-to-head contact. They are much harder to get than a cold, flu, ear infection, pink eye, strep throat, food poisoning, or impetigo.
You can get lice from your dog, guinea pig, or other animal.	Lice are species specific. You can only get human lice from another human.
Lice are often passed via hats and helmets.	Rare, but possible. Hairbrushes, pillows and sheets are much more common modes of transmission. Direct, physical, head-to-head contact is <b>the usual method</b> of transmission.
School is a common place for lice transmission.	School is a VERY RARE source of transmission. Much more common are family members, overnight guests, and playmates that spend a large amount of time together.
Poor hygiene contributes to lice.	Hygiene makes absolutely no difference. Lice actually like clean hair more than dirty. You get lice by close personal contact with someone else that has lice, not by being dirty.
Lice can jump or fly from one person to another.	Lice can only crawl. They can neither fly nor jump. They must crawl from one person to another.
Any nits left in the hair can cause lice to come back.	Any nits farther away than <b>one quarter inch to one half inch</b> on the hair shaft are ALREADY HATCHED and pose no risk to others.
Eggs or nits can fall out of the hair, hatch, and cause lice in another person.	Nits are cemented to the hair and are very difficult to remove. They cannot fall off. Newly hatched larvae must find a head quickly or will die.
Lice can live a long time.	Lice live only 1-3 days off of the head.
Checking a classroom when one student has lice can prevent lice from spreading.	Classroom transmission is EXCEEDINGLY RARE and a waste of valuable teaching time. Checking family members and close playmates is much more appropriate.
Avoiding lice is important as they spread disease.	Lice do not spread any known disease. They are annoying and icky but do NOT cause disease.

**Check your child's head weekly for lice and/or nits (eggs). Mature lice, which are no bigger than a sesame seed, avoid light and are hard to see. Lice eggs or "nits" are usually found close to the scalp. They appear as tiny whitish ovals that are "glued" to the hair shaft. If your child is scratching their scalp a lot, (especially around the ears and nape of the neck) this can be a sign of head lice infestation.**

**Please contact the school if you find head lice or nits on your child so that we can keep track of occurrences and provide additional information to you. If you have questions or difficulties treating the head lice on your child, please contact the school nurse, local health department, or your child's physician.**