

3/15/2018

Health Nutrition Services Presents:

HEAD LICE



Presentation Outcomes:

- Facts and Myths about Head Lice
- Identifying Head Lice and Nits
- Providing Support for families
- Providing Support for center staff



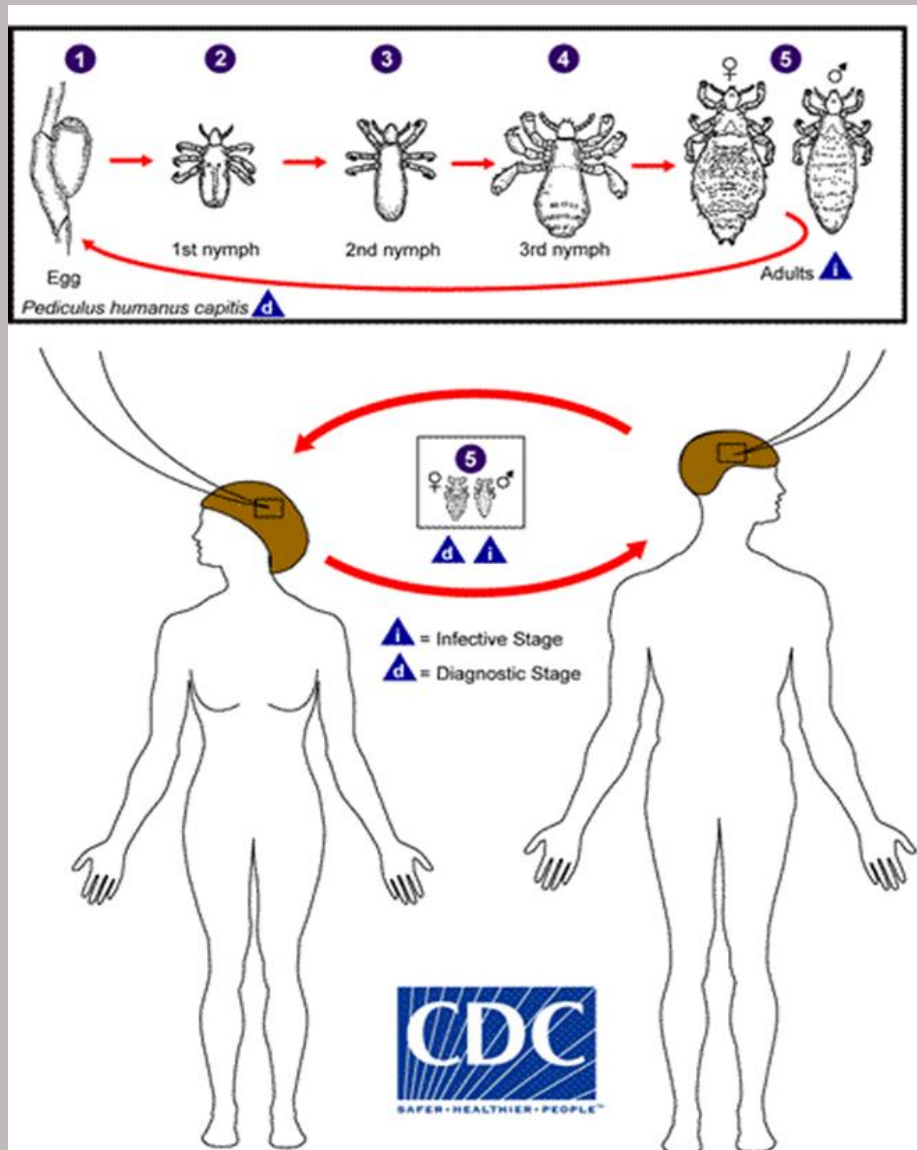
CDC Facts:

- Getting head lice is not related to cleanliness of the person, or his or her environment.
- An estimated 6 million to 12 million infestations occur each year in the United States among children 3 to 11 years of age.
- Some studies suggest that girls get head lice more often than boys, probably due to more frequent head-to-head contact.
- The head louse found most frequently in the United States may have claws that are better adapted for grasping the shape and width of some types of hair.



Adult louse claws (CDC Photo)

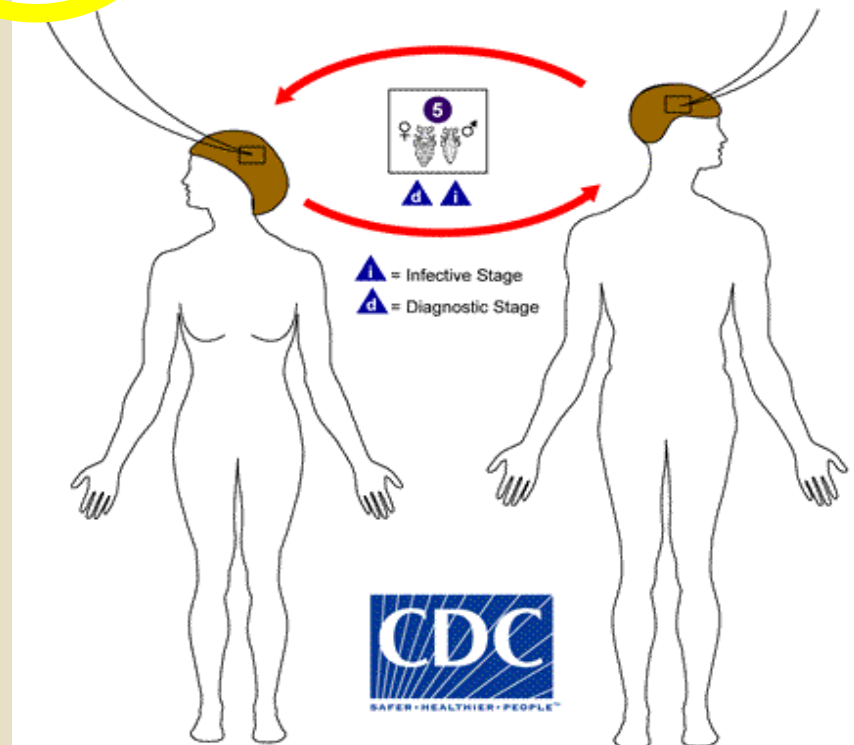
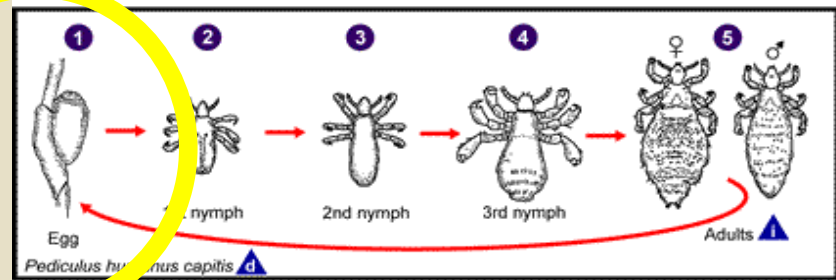
Life Cycle of Head Lice



The life cycle of the head louse has three stages: egg, nymph, and adult

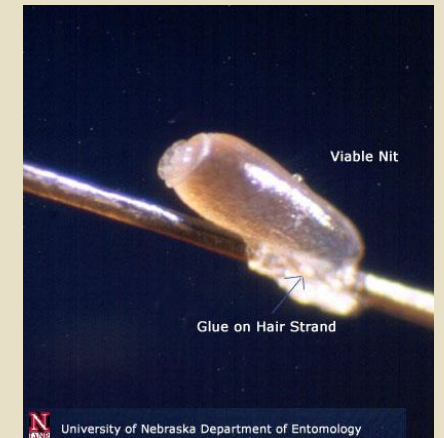
The head louse is an ectoparasite whose only hosts are humans. The louse feeds on blood several times daily and resides close to the scalp to maintain its body temperature.

Life Cycle of Head Lice

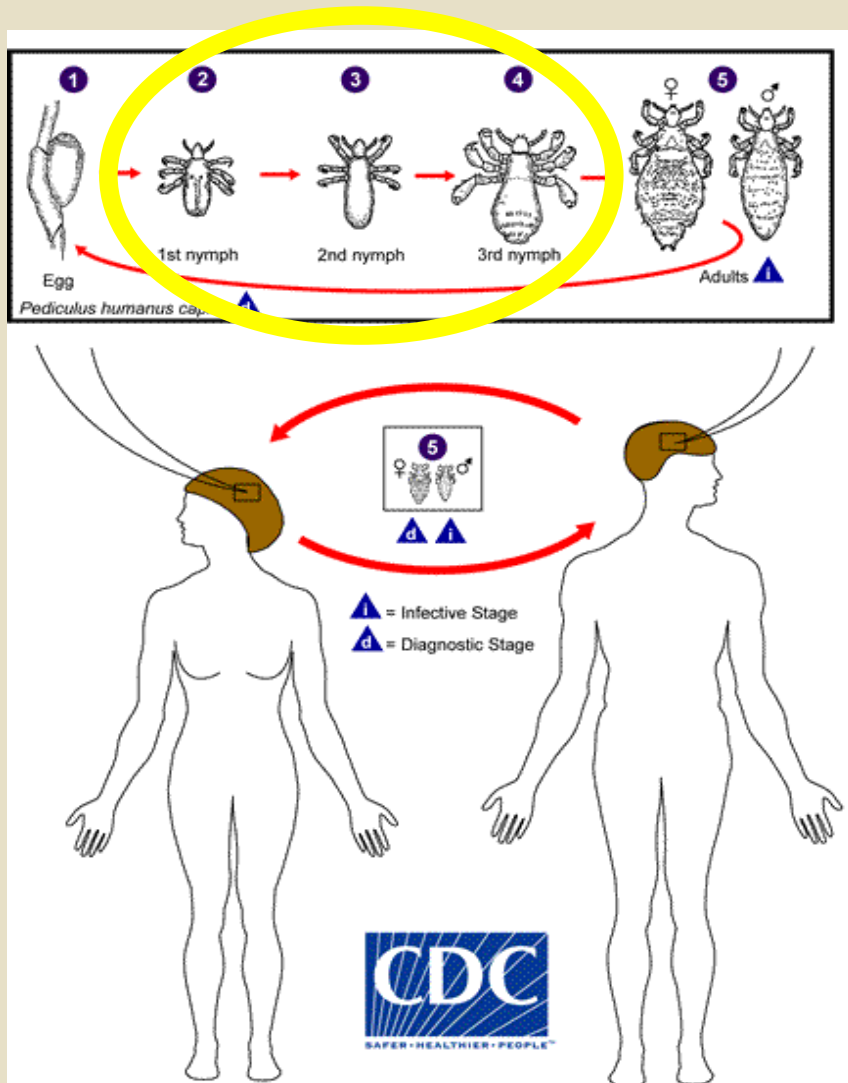


Eggs:

- Nits are head lice eggs. They are hard to see and are often confused for dandruff or hair spray droplets.
- Nits are laid by the adult female and are cemented at the base of the hair shaft nearest the scalp . They are 0.8 mm by 0.3 mm, oval and usually yellow to white.
- Nits take about 1 week to hatch (range 6 to 9 days). Viable eggs are usually located within 6 mm of the scalp.



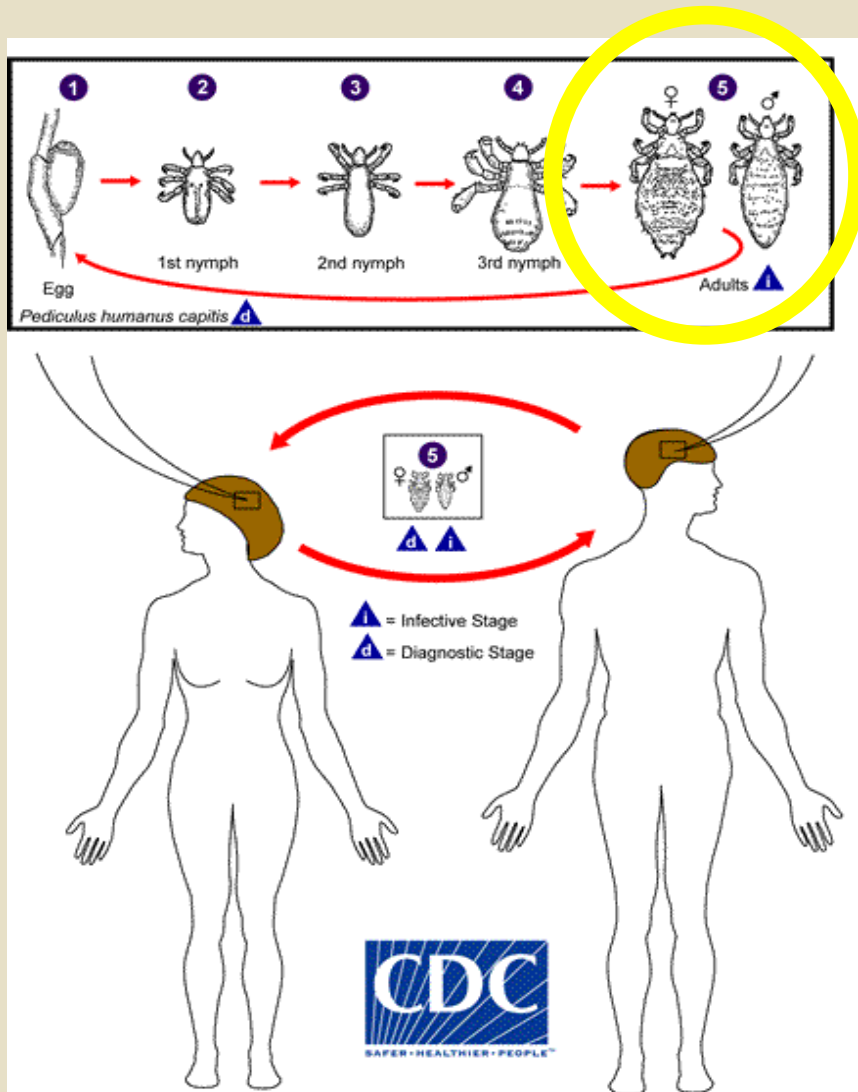
Life Cycle of Head Lice



Nymphs:

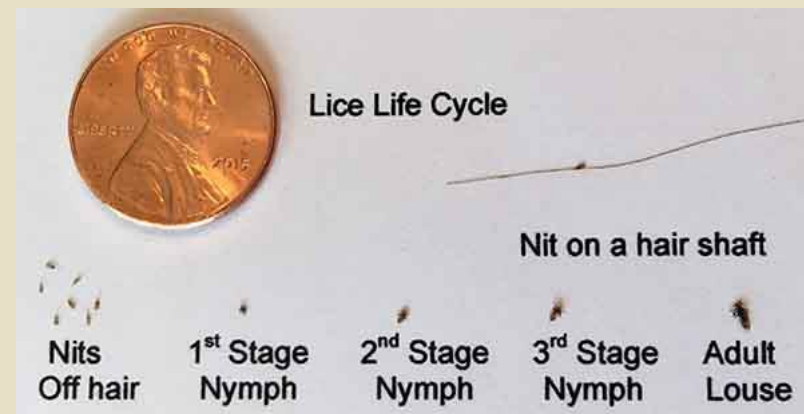
- The egg hatches to release a nymph . The nit shell then becomes a more visible dull yellow and remains attached to the hair shaft.
- The nymph looks like an adult head louse, but is about the size of a pinhead.
- Nymphs mature after three molts and become adults about 7 days after hatching.

Life Cycle of Head Lice



Adults:

- The adult louse is about the size of a sesame seed, has 6 legs (each with claws), and is tan to grayish-white. In persons with dark hair, the adult louse will appear darker.
- Females are usually larger than males and can lay up to 8 nits per day.
- Adult lice can live up to 30 days on a person's head.
- To live, adult lice need to feed on blood several times daily. Without blood meals, the louse will die within 1 to 2 days off the host.



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True or False:

- **Only dirty children get head lice.**

FALSE.

Head lice infest children from all backgrounds and walks of life. Anyone can get head lice, no matter how clean their home or hair is or where they live, go to school, or play. All it takes is head-to-head contact with someone who has head lice.

- **Head lice are dangerous.**

FALSE.

Head lice do not carry any diseases. They may cause itching in people who are allergic to head louse bites, which can lead to excessive scratching. This scratching may increase the chances of a secondary skin infection.

- **Children who have head lice are always itching.**

FALSE.

Only some people are allergic to louse saliva, which causes the scalp to itch in some people.² Minor itching can also be a side effect of some head lice treatments.

- **Head lice can live in a mattress or pillowcase for weeks at a time.**

FALSE.

Because they need to feed on blood to survive, head lice will only live 1 or 2 days away from the human host.

- **There's no reason to involve your doctor if you think your child has head lice.**

FALSE.

If you think your child has head lice, consider talking with your doctor to confirm the diagnosis and get advice on appropriate treatments. Natural remedies such as homeopathic shampoos that contain sodium chloride 10% may cause stinging when applied, and their effectiveness has not been proven.⁴

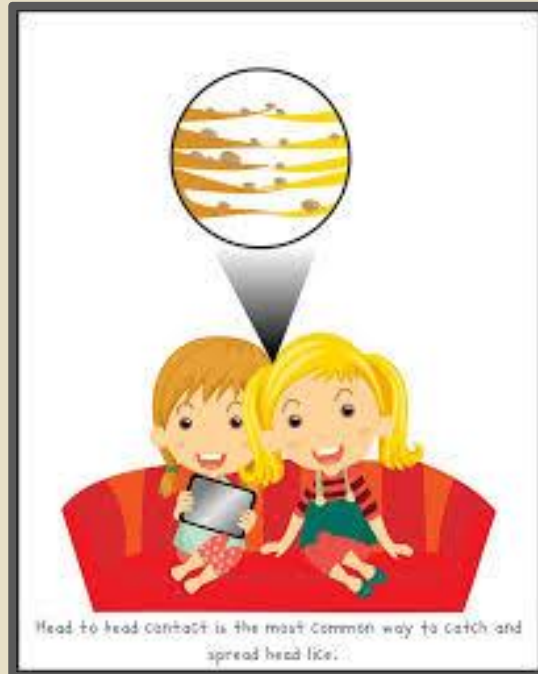


True or False

- **Head lice can't jump, hop, or fly.**

TRUE.

Head lice crawl quickly from person to person through head-to-head contact.² However, head lice can be projected from the scalp as a result of static buildup from brushing dry hair.



- **Head lice don't spread easily to pillows, furniture, stuffed animals, or clothes, but can remain on them for 1-2 days.**

TRUE.

Head lice usually spread through close contact with a person's head or, less commonly, through sharing things like hats, helmets, scarves, or pillows.⁶

Close contact with an infested person's head can occur in unexpected ways, so be alert. For example, squeezing together for group selfies could allow lice to spread from one child to another.

No more -“No Nit Policy”

"No-nit" policies that require a child to be free of nits before they can return to schools should be discontinued for the following reasons:

- Many nits are more than ¼ inch from the scalp. Such nits are usually not viable and very unlikely to hatch to become crawling lice, or may in fact be empty shells, also known as 'casings'.
- Nits are cemented to hair shafts and are very unlikely to be transferred successfully to other people.
- The burden of unnecessary absenteeism to the students, families and communities far outweighs the risks associated with head lice.
- Misdiagnosis of nits is very common during nit checks conducted by nonmedical personnel.

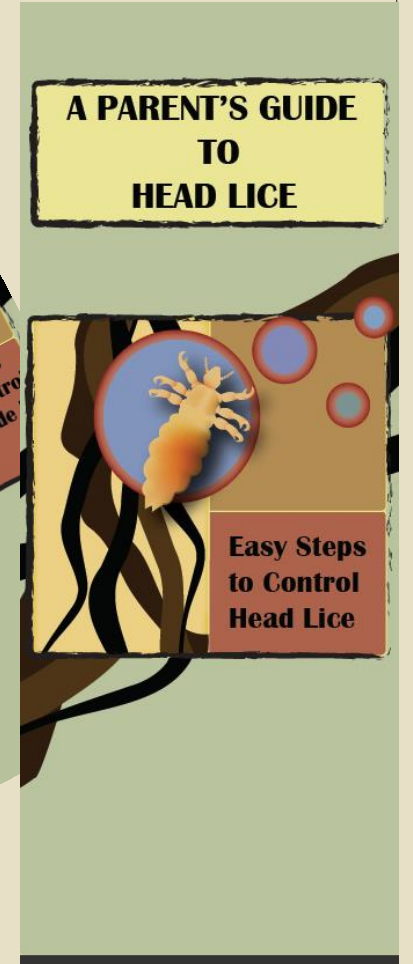
The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the National Association of School Nurses (NASN) advocate that "no-nit" policies should be discontinued.

Supporting parents:

- Educational brochures available in every language @

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/HeadLice.aspx>

- Nit combing and removal
- Treatments
- Home treatment
- Nit removal videos available on You Tube
- Medi-Cal approved Rx treatments: there are over 6 approved prescription strength treatments.
- HNS unit can provide nit combs.



Classroom Tips:

- Remove all hats, stuffed animals, play clothes, hair items. Seal in a plastic bag for 2 weeks.
- Vacuum area rugs and fabric furniture.
- Encourage staff to continue disinfecting and sanitation practices per policy and procedures.
- Inspect affected child before drop-off. If live louse are present, follow temporary exclusion policies and procedures.
 - Remember: NITS are okay.



Additional Resources:

- <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/health-services-newsletter-201507.pdf>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/index.html>
- <https://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/pages/AAP-Updates-Treatments-for-Head-Lice.aspx>
- <https://schoolnursenet.nasn.org/viewdocument/head-lice-101-presentation>

