

Portland Public School Nurses recommendations

Conditioner and Combing for Head Lice

1. Buy a large bottle of conditioner and long-tined metal comb
2. Apply conditioner to hair so it is coated scalp to tips
3. Use long-tined metal comb- Licemeister at CVS. com \$9.95 each or blue topped one available at Rite Aid
4. Comb through hair section by section carefully from scalp to tips removing lice, egg and conditioner "sludge" with tissue and throw in trash with each combing. The conditioner helps the comb slip through the hair and it helps trap the live lice.
5. Change bedding and take any favorite stuffed animals the child sleeps with off bed and place in trash bag for 2 weeks or in hot dryer for 10 minutes. Vacuum favorite lounging places. Wash combs and brushes with hot, soapy water and rinse. Otherwise, concentrate on the head.
6. Every day for 6 weeks, comb through dry hair in the morning. Throw any live lice in trash. You will eventually "catch" any hatched lice until there are no viable eggs left. The head lice occupation is over.

Alternatively, you can pick out head lice eggs with your fingertips, but you still need daily combing as you will never get them all out. The key is to comb until the life cycle is broken. People have to do it Every Day! Some people don't get a live louse for a day or two after a week or so and stop combing- That doesn't work.

There are several different over-the-counter treatments to use also which kill the lice and nits but they all need to be followed by combing and picking as above.

Go to www.hsph.harvard.edu/headlice for further info about lice.