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## Use lice in a sentence

Medically reviewed by Stacy Sampson, D.O. — Written by Zora DeGrandpre, MS, ND — Updated on October 6, 2018Spread of liceSymptomsTreatmentPreventionOutlook OverviewHearing that someone in your child’s classroom has lice — or finding out that your own child does — isn’t pleasant. However, it’s more common than you might think. The American Academy of Dermatology estimates that every year, 6-12 million kids between 3 and 12 years old get head lice. But you can feel reassured about a few things:Head lice can be treated by a variety of methods, and you can get rid of them.Having lice doesn’t mean that you or your child aren’t clean or have poor hygiene. Anyone can get lice.Head lice don’t spread disease. Body lice can sometimes spread them, but head lice haven’t been found to carry any diseases.If you’re concerned about the safety of a lice treatment, use natural treatments. Some research shows that they can be effective in treating infestations.Lice don’t have wings, so they only crawl. However, they can be surprisingly fast. Here’s an overview of how lice spread — and what you can do to stop them.Head lice spread by direct contact with an affected person’s hair. Kids will hug each other and literally put their heads together. You can’t completely prevent this, nor do many parents want to. But be cautious of any child who’s scratching their head constantly or who complains of an itchy head, and follow up with the school nurse or the child’s parents.Head lice can also be spread by indirect contact with personal items that the affected person used:Hats, scarves, helmets, and caps shouldn’t be shared. Even shared lockers or coat racks can harbor head lice.Make sure your child has their own comb or brush.Make sure your child uses their own hair ties, barrettes, scrunchies, and hair pins and doesn’t borrow these from other children. Be open and honest with your kids — they don’t want head lice any more than you do.If your child is involved in a sport, make sure they have their own gear, and keep track of it. At the pool or gym, make sure your child has their own towels and other personal items.A few signs of head lice may be noticeable right away, especially if your child doesn’t normally have these issues: excessive or abnormal itchiness on the scalphead scratchingcomplaints of tickling sensations on the scalpbumps or irritation on the scalp from scratchingtrouble sleeping, as head lice are nocturnal and can be the most bothersome at nighttiny yellow or tan dots on the shaft of the hair strands, which may be lice eggs (or nits)You may not notice the symptoms of head lice right away. Head scratching is not uncommon for children, and some symptoms may take weeks to appear.Head scratching and tiny white specks in the hair can also be symptoms of dandruff. Dandruff is a condition where dead skin cells flake off the scalp. But if your child rubs their hair and the specks don’t fall off the hair, you might be seeing nits.As soon as you notice these symptoms, brush through your child’s hair with a comb, magnifying glass, and bright light to find and identify any nits or adult lice. While nits look like tiny dots, adult lice are about the size of a small seed and are usually tan or gray. Once you’ve identified lice in your child’s hair, treat your child right away.If your child appears to have a severe infestation, see a doctor to ask about the most effective course of treatment. Over-the-counter treatmentsIf the infestation is mild, you can treat it at home with an over-the-counter treatment by doing the following: Treat your child’s dry hair with a special liquid head lice medicine called a pediculicide. It’s available as a shampoo or lotion. Some options include pyrethrin, synthetic pyrethrin, or permethrin. Be sure to carefully read the instructions regarding age and usage requirements. Have your child put on clean clothes once the treatment is finished.Wait 8-12 hours to see if the lice and nits have been killed.Use a nit comb (like a flea comb for dogs and cats) to get all the dead eggs and lice out of the hair.Read more: Lice treatments and medications After the infestation has been stopped.Check your child’s hair every few days to make sure no lice survived to lay more eggs.Wet your child’s hair and comb through all of it from the scalp to the end of each section of hair. Use conditioner and a nit comb to remove any remaining dead eggs or lice.You may need at least two bottles of the lice treatment if your child has long hair. You’ll most likely need to apply the medicine several times before the nits and lice are effectively treated. Prescription treatmentsIf you still see lice moving around, try the treatment again and wait to see if the second treatment is effective. If you still see live lice, see your child’s doctor, especially if you’ve tried several over-the-counter treatments. They can tell you about prescription treatments like benzyl alcohol or malathion. Children who are at least 6 years of age can be treated with malathion, and children at least 6 months of age can be treated with benzyl alcohol.Essential oilsYou can also use essential oils in the hair, such as tea tree oil or nerolidol, to help kill lice and nits. You can also try smothering agents like olive oil and butter. These can be applied to the scalp and kept on the head overnight under a shower cap to kill the lice by suffocating them. Avoid theseNever use any flammable treatments, such as kerosene, as these treatments can potentially be deadly. Don’t use any pet’s flea treatment shampoos. They haven’t been tested on children and may be unsafe to use.It isn’t necessary to spray your home and belongings with potentially dangerous insecticides. Lice are “obligate parasites,” which means that they don’t survive very long without a human host. They die within 24 to 48 hours after being removed.After you treat your child’s head and have removed all the nits, there are several recommended follow-up steps:Everyone in the household should change their clothing and bed linens. These items, as well as any hats, scarves, coats, and gloves, should be washed in hot water (at least 140oF, or 60oC) and dried with heat for at least 20 minutes.If something isn’t machine washable, take it to the dry cleaner. But first, warn the dry-cleaning staff about the article’s exposure to lice.Vacuum all chairs, sofas, headboards, and anything that may have come into contact with anyone’s head.Soak combs, brushes, and hair ties in a 10 percent bleach or 2 percent Lysol solution for one hour. You can also heat them in water as close to boiling as possible. You can also go out and get new combs, brushes, and hair ties, which may be a safer option.If your child has reoccurring infestations, talk to your doctor about treatments or lifestyle changes that can help. Lice can sometimes develop a resistance to certain medications, so you may need to try several before you find the best treatment for head lice.Head lice don’t cause any long-term health effects and are more annoying than harmful. Most of the time, they’re easily treated at home with over-the-counter medicine. They’re also easily prevented by practicing good hygiene, washing affected clothes and items after an infestation, and being cautious about sharing clothes, hats, brushes, or other items that come into contact with your hair. Last medically reviewed on March 27, 2017 What are lice?Lice are tiny insects called parasites that spread by personal contact, as well as by sharing belongings. Children are particularly likely to catch and spread lice.Learn how to identify symptoms that indicate you or your child may have lice.There are three main types of lice. They all come from the same parasite family, but they’re each a different species:You can find head lice on the scalp, neck, and ears.Body lice start out on clothing or in beds, but they move from those locations to people’s skin.Pubic lice are also called “crabs.” You can find them on pubic hair and skin.The most common symptom of any type of lice is itching. Lice bites cause an allergic reaction that causes this itchy feeling. However, you may not feel itchy right away, especially if it’s a light infestation. You may not notice any symptoms for up to six weeks the first time you get lice.In addition to intense itching, lice can cause other symptoms, such as:a tickling feeling of something moving on your head, hair, or bodysores that develop from scratching itchesirritabilitydifficulty sleepingred bumps on your head, neck, shoulders, or pubic areath appearance of lice eggs, or small white objects in your hairLice eggs are also called “nits.” They appear on hair shafts and are difficult to brush out of the hair.Head lice can cause an itchy scalp, but so can other skin conditions, such as dandruff, eczema, or even allergies to shampoo and other hair products. Therefore, it’s important to know how to check for lice, especially on children.First, wet your child’s hair. This slows the lice down and makes them easier to spot. Use a fine-toothed comb to part your child’s hair; then shine a bright light onto their scalp. Get a comb for finding lice here.If your child has lice, you’ll notice small, brown insects the size of sesame seeds moving around or nits that look like they’re cemented on to individual hairs.You may be unsure if you see dirt or lice and nits. Lice and nits are often difficult to comb out, while you can easily remove dirt.Head lice are contagious. You should take precautions to avoid catching or sharing them. Don’t share personal belongings such as hairbrushes, hairclips, combs, and hats. Launder clothes and sheets regularly.If you think you may have a lice infestation at home, vacuum the floor and furniture, and then cover furniture for two weeks with a plastic drop cloth.It’s difficult to prevent the spread of lice in school or childcare settings. You can ask your child to avoid head-to-head contact with other kids during playtime. Avoiding shared spaces for clothing and hats, such as closets and lockers, may also help prevent the spread of lice.However, even with good hygiene practices, your child may still develop lice. If so, the best way to treat symptoms is through medications that your doctor can prescribe or recommend.You can treat lice with some over-the-counter (OTC) products, as well as prescription medications. You can purchase OTC shampoos that contain ingredients that treat lice, such as pyrethrin or permethrin.Medications that your doctor may prescribe include:malathion, which you rub into your hair and scalp before rinsing offbenzyl alcohol lotion, which is a lotion that you apply to your hair and scalp for 10 minutes before rinsing off lindane shampooMake sure you read the labels of all prescription medications and follow the directions.If you’re uncertain whether you or a family member has lice, see your doctor. Your doctor can use a special light called a Wood’s light to make the nits more visible. They can identify whether or not you have lice.If you do have lice, it’s possible to use home treatments to get rid of lice and avoid further symptoms. Wash contaminated clothing, sheets, and towels, and use over-the-counter treatments as needed. Medically reviewed by Debra Sullivan, Ph.D., MSN, R.N., CNE, COI — Written by Zawn Villines on June 20, 2017What are lice?SymptomsWhat causes lice?Treatment for licePrevention of liceLice are tiny parasitic insects that feed on blood and live in hair. But what are the symptoms to look out for to catch and treat lice quickly?Head lice can infest the hair, eyelashes, and eyebrows, while pubic lice infest the pubic hair.The idea of bugs crawling in your hair or your child’s hair can be unnerving and upsetting. Contrary to folk wisdom, lice aren’t the result of poor hygiene, and they don’t carry diseases.However, they can cause a lot of discomfort and spread easily to other children. Catching lice early and treating them appropriately helps ensure they do not spread. This article gives an overview of the symptoms so people can answer the question: is it lice?Share on PinterestLice are about the size of a small seed and feed on human blood from the scalp.The head louse, *Pediculus humanus capitis*, is a tiny insect that feeds on human blood and lives on the scalp and in the hair.Lice are tiny, measuring only about 2-3 millimeters, about the size of a small seed. Adults are oval-shaped and grayish-brown with no wings. From a distance, they look like little more than tiny specks. That might be why it is so easy to miss a lice infestation.Adult lice live about 30 days, and quickly die if they fall off the head. They are prolific breeders, with females laying about six eggs per day.Eggs are sometimes called nits and tend to be located at the root of the hair, right next to the scalp. They are tiny and look white or clear in colour.Eggs hatch into nymphs, smaller versions of adult lice, which mature into adults about 2 weeks later.Seeing either lice or eggs indicates a head lice infestation since eggs inevitably hatch into adults. The only way to get rid of head lice is to kill both the living insects and the eggs they lay.Many people with head lice have no symptoms at all. It’s impossible to diagnose head lice based on symptoms alone since the only symptom that matters is the presence of lice.However, experiencing the following symptoms suggests it is time to check the scalp:Frequent unexplained itching of the head or scalpredness or inflammation on the scalp or near the hairline tiny red bumps or sores from scratching the scalpdifficulty sleeping or concentrating due to head itchingDandruff, some scalp infections, and dry skin can cause symptoms similar to head lice. Because dandruff causes flaking, the flakes may be mistaken for lice nits.Checking for liceA diligent search for lice with a magnifying glass and good light can help discern the difference between lice and other symptoms.People should look for bugs moving on the scalp, or for eggs attached to the hair shaft, an inch or so from the scalp.It may be easier to see lice and their eggs when the hair is wet. So, if lice are not visible under a light, try washing the hair and then looking again.If no lice are visible, but the scalp is itchy, people should consult a doctor. The doctor may be more adept at detecting lice and can rule out other potential causes of symptoms.Share on PinterestChildren are more prone to lice because they come into close contact with other children through playing, hugging, and sharing hats and scarves.Lice can only be spread by direct contact with someone who has them. They do not spontaneously appear, and they have nothing to do with hygiene.Lice cannot hop or fly, which means the contact has to be close. Because young children spend so much time in close quarters with other children – and are often eager to share – they tend to get lice more than adults. Parents of young children are also vulnerable.Lice can spread through:hugging or nuzzling someoneleeping next to someone, with their head or hair in direct contactsharing brushes or combs, especially immediately after someone with lice uses themsharing hats or scarves, especially if they are passed back and forth quickly since lice die quickly when not on a human headsharing towelsLice treatment is usually pretty straightforward. An over-the-counter shampoo can kill the lice and their eggs. People should always follow the instructions on the packaging.Using shampooIn most cases, the shampoo will need to stay on the scalp a day or two to work, so the hair should not be washed immediately after treatment. Most shampoos require a second treatment 7-9 days after the initial application.People should carefully read the instructions to ensure they can understand and follow them.Checking the scalpAfter waiting a day or two, people should check the scalp. If many lice are still present and active, they might be resistant to treatment.People should follow the package instructions for a second treatment, or contact a doctor to get a recommendation for a second treatment.Combing the hairIn most cases, lice treatments require a thorough combing of the hair to remove eggs.Even if successful in killing all the adult lice, it is crucial to remove all the eggs, as they will hatch into nymphs that become adults.Removing eggs may need to be a daily undertaking for several days following treatment.Being careful with sensitive scalpsh People with allergies, a history of scalp infections, or an injured scalp, it may not be safe to use over-the-counter lice treatments. Talk to a physician before trying a lice shampoo.Treating challenging infestationsIn some people, getting rid of lice proves more challenging, which may be due to:the extent of the infestationre-infestation thanks to a school or workplace with a lice problemlice that are resistant to lice shampooWhen this happens, a more aggressive approach may be necessary, including:frequent washing with a lice shampooremoval of nitsconsultation with a doctorSome businesses also specialize in lice removal.Note that regular shampoo, water, folk remedies, and medications, such as antibiotics will not kill lice.Though anti-itch treatments might offer temporary relief from the itching lice cause, they won’t address the underlying lice infestation.Parents often struggle to get young children to practice even basic hygiene, such as washing hands. So asking them to minimize the risk of spreading lice is a daunting undertaking.Some strategies that help to reduce the risk include:not sharing headgear, brushes, or combs, or washing these items before donating or sharingensuring each family member has a personal pillow or pillowcasecleaning or disposing of items that a person with lice has usedurging children to respect the personal space of their friends by not rubbing heads or sleeping in close quarterskeeping children with lice home until the infestation has been clearedFamilies in which one member has lice are vulnerable to further infestation. People should check all family members for symptoms of lice, and treat as needed.Some other strategies to prevent lice from spreading among family members include:replacing all combs and brusheswashing all clothes, hats, and scarves before wearing them againreplacing pillows and pillowcases used by the person with lice Last medically reviewed on June 20, 2017DermatologyPublic HealthPediatrics / Children’s Health

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