

Head Lice to Dead Lice

A New Treatment Program to Address Persistent Head Lice Infestations

Four Step Battle Plan

The Huron County General Health District does NOT recommend the use of lice killing hair products. These may be toxic and unsafe if used inappropriately.

Step 1: The Olive Oil Treatment.

Olive oil smothers and kills active head lice. Apply as follows: Part hair and apply oil directly to the scalp, massage into the entire scalp and saturate hair completely. Within a few minutes this will cut off the oxygen to the lice. Leave oil on till the next morning or for at least 8 hours, covering with a shower cap and securing it with a bandana. Use this treatment every 4 days over the next 3 weeks. So, use this oil treatment on days 1, 5, 9, 13, 17, and 21. The treatments are timed to coincide with the life cycle of the louse. Do not miss any of these days or chances are that you will have to start over. (The olive oil kills by covering the holes through which the lice breathe. If lice aren't completely covered by the oil, they may not die.)

Step 2: Comb Out the Nits.

Leave the olive oil in the hair for the comb out (this may also make nit removal easier). Use a good metal nit comb, combing hair thin section by thin section, cleaning the comb in between sections. Next, comb carefully over the entire scalp. Then wash out the oil with a shampoo made for oily hair. Apply shampoo to hair before wetting, then lather and rinse. It may take two shampoo applications to remove oil.

Step 3: Check for Nits.

Check dry hair in bright light for any nits you may have missed.

Step 4: Clean the Environment.

- Vacuum the house: furniture, carpet, stuffed toys, etc. (especially in the infected person's room).
- Combs and brushes should be soaked in hot water for 20 minutes.
- Wash all bedding and blankets in hot water for 20 minutes and dry in a hot dryer for at least 20 minutes.
- Items that can't be washed should be sealed inside airtight plastic bags for 2 weeks.
- Check the heads of everyone living in the home. If nits are present, the affected person should be treated.