

# Head Lice Fact Sheet — No. 4

## How do I keep lice from coming back?

1. Carefully follow the directions on the lice treatment package. Not following directions, is the biggest reason why it doesn't work.
2. If your child has extra long hair (longer than shoulder length), you may need to use a second bottle. Pay special attention to instructions on the bottle about how to thoroughly work it into the hair, how long the medication should be left on and whether rinsing the hair is recommended after treatment.
3. Comb out the nits left after treatments. (See Fact Sheet #3 to learn about nits.) Do this by sliding a nit up the hair shaft with your fingers or using a nit comb. Special nit combs are available in the store where you bought the lice treatment.
4. Most of the time a second treatment is necessary. If you don't kill the nits, they will hatch and your child will have lice again – this time without any contact with another infested child! All products specifically created to treat head lice will recommend a second treatment and a second nit combing, anywhere from 7 to 10 days after the first treatment to kill any left over lice and nits.
5. Launder clothing and bedding immediately before lice treatment on your child so any live lice living there can't crawl onto lice-free, just treated heads!
  - Laundry water should be at least 130 degrees Fahrenheit to kill the lice.
  - **CAUTION:** Do not bathe or shampoo in water this hot! This temperature is for laundry only!
6. Dry cleaning kills lice and their nits in clothing that can't be washed.



7. Sealing clothing, stuffed toys, pillows, blankets or other small soft items, for two weeks in tightly closed plastic bags will kill both lice and nits! It's low cost, too.
8. Safe, effective, FDA approved chemical sprays made to kill head lice, are available over the counter. These are OK to use on things that can't be washed, dry-cleaned, or sealed in plastic bags; like furniture, carpets, car seats or other large, immobile or non-washable items.
9. Vacuum or sweep carpets, furniture and curtains to pick up any live lice or nits that may have fallen or crawled there.
10. Soak combs, brushes and some other washable items for one hour in one of the approved lice shampoos; or, soak them for 5 to 10 minutes in a pan of 130 degree hot water.
11. Teach your whole family about how lice is spread and treated. Teach your children not to share combs, brushes and other personal items with other children.
12. Ask the teacher at your child's school if there is space to keep jackets, hats and other personal items separate for each child. Ask what you can do to help the school educate children and parents to stop the spread of lice.
13. Check your child's hair from time to time for signs of lice; especially if you know of another child at school that is infested. Catching it early can cut down the number of treatments, save time and money.



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