



Headlice - What are head lice?

Fact

- Head lice are tiny insects that like to live in your hair.
- They live near your scalp – the skin on your head and they suck your blood for food.
- They lay their eggs near your scalp too so that there's a good supply of food nearby when those eggs hatch.
- When they suck your blood it irritates your skin and makes it feel itchy.
- You can get rid of head lice by using a treatment shampoo that you buy at the chemist and by using a special comb that scrapes the head lice and their eggs from your hair.

Do you know

- Head lice are also known as cooties and nits.
- Head lice will live on anyone's hair especially if it is nice and clean because head lice like a nice clean home.
- They have three parts to their body and have six legs and the adult louse is about the size of a sesame seed.
- They glue their eggs onto your hair, which is why they can be really hard to get rid of, and the eggs hatch within 7-10 days after being laid.
- A female head lice will start laying eggs when it's about 7 days old.
- They only live for about a month and for only about 24 - 48 hours if they fall off your head and don't have any blood to suck!

Experiments you can do

Check your family and friends for head lice and get them to do the same for you. If you find someone with them it's great! That means they can get rid of them by using a special shampoo and comb. Don't give them a hard time about it because it could have been you that gave them the nits in the first place!

Other Investigations

Find out about some of the other blood-sucking creatures we have on our bodies or around our homes. Some you probably know about like mosquitoes and fleas but how about heading to the library for a book on bed bugs!!

Jokes

What did the head lice say to the other head lice? You wait here - I'll go on a head.