

Wet combing

TO CHECK FOR AND TREAT HEADLICE

Conditioner 'stuns' the headlice making them easier to comb out.

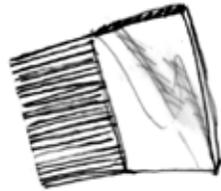
Using white conditioner makes the headlice easier to see.



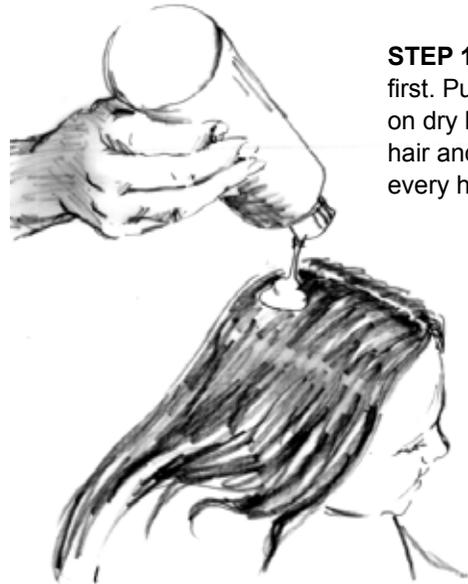
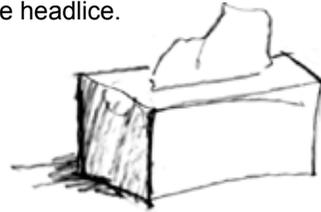
Wide-tooth comb to untangle hair.



Fine-tooth nit comb to comb out the headlice.



Using **white paper tissues** makes it easier to see the headlice.



STEP 1: Don't wet the hair first. Put lots of conditioner on dry hair - all over the hair and scalp. Aim to cover every hair from root to tip.



STEP 2: Untangle the hair with a wide-tooth comb. Part longer hair into sections and fasten each section back with clips.



STEP 3: Quickly start combing the hair with the fine-tooth nit comb: hold the comb flat against the scalp and comb the hair in small sections from root to tip.



STEP 4: After each stroke wipe the conditioner off the nit comb onto a tissue and look for headlice and nits (eggs). Also check the nit comb and remove any headlice or nits from it before continuing.

Comb each section of the head at least five times.

Place used tissues in a bin. Wash combs (and hairclips) thoroughly with warm soapy water after use and wash hair as normal.

Do this treatment every second day (for example, Monday and Wednesday and Friday) for three weeks.

NOTE: A new infestation is easier to treat than an established one, so use **wet combing once a week** to find and treat headlice before they can lay too many eggs!

Chemical treatment

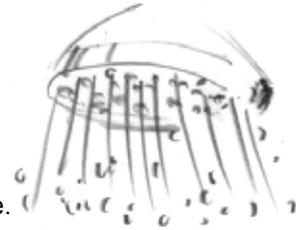
Headlice lotion or foam - available from most supermarkets or chemists.

Always read the directions on the label or ask a chemist or community health worker to explain them to you - follow the directions carefully.



Ordinary comb - to spread the lotion evenly, especially for long hair.

Water - to rinse out the lotion and dead headlice.



Towel - to cover and protect eyes from the lotion, and for drying the hair after rinsing.

Don't use hair conditioner for at least a day before treatment as it can stop the treatment from working.

Ask the person being treated to hold a towel over their eyes while you put the lotion on.



Most products should be put on **dry** hair, all over the hair and scalp. Apply enough lotion to cover every hair from root to tip.

Chemical treatment continued over the page.

Chemical treatment

Continued from over the page.

For long hair, apply the lotion near the scalp, then comb to spread the lotion evenly through the whole length of the hair.

If any lotion is left on the comb after one stroke, wipe it back on the hair at the scalp and repeat the process.



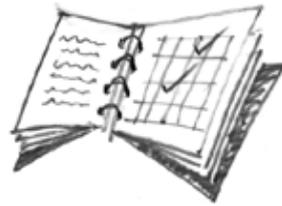
Leave the lotion on the hair for 20 minutes or longer if the directions on the label say so.

After 20 minutes, rinse out the lotion with lots of water.

Don't use conditioner for at least a day after treatment, as it can stop the treatment from working.



Towel-dry the hair. Don't use a hair dryer - heat can destroy the chemical that kills the headlice.



Important Follow-up

After one week, treat again using the same steps to kill headlice that have hatched from nits (eggs) that weren't killed by the first treatment.

If headlice are still found after the second treatment, try a product with a different active ingredient* or try **wet combing** (over the page).

NOTE: A new infestation is easier to treat than an established one. Use **wet combing once a week** to find and treat headlice before they can lay too many eggs!

** There are several different active ingredients used in headlice treatment products. Compare product labels or ask your chemist for advice.*

Don't forget to check everyone who lives in your house and treat all those with 'live' headlice at the same time.

This fact sheet has been produced by the Environmental Health Service of the South Australian Department of Health.

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Government of South Australia
Department of Health

Headlice

WET COMBING & CHEMICAL TREATMENT

