



minnesota
Lice Lady

Oldest and Largest: Since 2010

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Myths and Facts

Myth #1: Lice Live on Hats

Busted: Lice cannot live on hats.

Lice are designed to live exclusively on the human scalp, where they can feed on blood and stay warm. They have tiny hook-like claws made to cling to hair strands—not fabric. They don't hang out on hats waiting to jump onto a new head.

In fact, hats often act as protection because they keep hair contained. That's why lice cases peak in warmer months when kids are wearing their hair down during social activities, and why winter—when hats are common—tends to be a slower season for lice spread.

Study: 0% lice found on 1000 hats from the 1000 children who had more than 5500 lice on their combined heads

<https://benthamopen.com/contents/pdf/TODJ/TODJ-4-72.pdf>

Myth #2: You Can Get Lice from Sharing Hairbrushes or Pillows

Busted: Transmission this way is extremely rare.

Lice spread only through head-to-head contact. Think of a louse like Tarzan swinging from one vine to another—it has to grab onto another hair before letting go of the first. They know leaving a head means certain death within hours due to dehydration.

While a hairbrush may pick up a shed hair with a nit attached, nits need the precise heat and humidity of the scalp to hatch. A fallen hair on a pillow, hat, or brush will not produce a new louse.

Study: only 4% live lice were found on infested subjects' pillowcases

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/12890107/>

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Myth #3: Lice Can Jump or Fly

Busted: Lice can't jump, fly, or hop.

They can only crawl along hair strands, moving best from one head to another during direct contact. No “flying lice” are going to leap across the playground.

Study: how head lice infestations occur

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/headlice/headlice.html#:~:text=Head%20lice%20have%20no%20wings,contact%20with%20an%20infested%20person.>

Myth #4: My Pet Can Get Lice

Busted: Lice are species-specific.

Human lice can only live on humans. Your dog, cat, hamster, or any other pet is completely safe from head lice and cannot spread them.

Study: Head Lice: Perfectly Adapted Human Predators

https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Walter-Pray/publication/242304415_Head_Lice_Perfectly_Adapted_Human_Predators/links/540f11e00cf2d8daaad095b0/Head-Lice-Perfectly-Adapted-Human-Predators.pdf

Myth #5: Lice Only Infest Dirty Hair

Busted: Lice actually prefer clean hair.

They attach their eggs (nits) to hair strands using a glue-like substance. Clean, smooth hair makes it easier for them to cling on. Having lice is never a reflection of hygiene.

What the experts say: If someone has lice does that mean them or their home is unclean?

<https://www.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/head-lice.page>

Quick Tips to Prevent Lice Spread

- **Braid or bun hair:** Containing all loose strands makes it harder for lice to grab on.
- **Use lice repellent sprays or leave-in conditioners:** Masking the human scent can discourage lice from transferring.
- **Focus on the head, not the house:** Lice do not live in the environment, and deep cleaning is not needed.

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