



CAMP DIRECTOR FAQ

Practical Answers. Confident Care.

Quick answers to common questions about head lice at camp.



1. What should we do if a camper is found to have head lice?

Stay calm. Head lice are a nuisance, but they are not dangerous and do not spread disease. Most camps have a policy for notifying parents and determining whether the camper can remain at camp or should be picked up.



2. Can a camper attend or stay home with lice?

Policies vary by camp. Some camps allow children to remain after treatment begins, while others require parent pickup. Check your camp's specific policy.



3. How contagious are head lice?

Head lice are less contagious than many people think. They do not jump, fly, or swim. Most transmission occurs through direct head-to-head contact. It's a good idea to encourage campers with longer hair to wear braids or buns and avoid sharing brushes or hair accessories.



4. Should we check the entire cabin or group?

If a camper is found to have lice, it may be reasonable to check close contacts or cabin mates. Widespread panic screening is typically unnecessary.



5. Can lice jump or fly?

No. Head lice can only move by crawling from one hair to another. They do not jump, fly, or swim. Unlike insects that walk on flat surfaces, lice are specially designed to stay close to the human scalp.



6. Should a camper with lice avoid activities?

It can be very embarrassing for a child to be singled out at camp. If treatment is not immediately available, one option is to place long hair in a braid or bun and tightly limit it with hairspray or another styling product.

Unless the infestation is extreme (for example, multiple visible live lice), most normal camp activities can continue. Reducing prolonged head-to-head contact is usually the most practical approach.



7. Can empty nits (shells/casings) hatch?

No. Empty shells are harmless and cannot hatch. Lice eggs require the heat and humidity of the scalp to develop. Once an egg hatches, the remaining shell is harmless and simply an empty casing.



8. Do we need to clean the entire camp?

No. We always say, "Focus on the head, not the house."

Head lice depend on human blood and survive only a short time away from the scalp. A hot dryer cycle is sufficient for bedding and towels. A sticky lint roller can be used on fabric surfaces, if needed.



KEEP CAMPERS AT CAMP

With proper treatment and sensible precautions, a camper with lice can remain at camp until parent pickup.

Treat the lice, not the child.



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Always follow your camp's policies and local health department guidelines.