

PALOS VERDES PENINSULA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Health Services

**EVERYTHING YOU REALLY DIDN'T WANT TO KNOW ABOUT LICE!**

**Definitions:**

Louse-small insect that lives on the scalp

Lice-more than one louse

Nits-eggs, dead or alive, of a louse

<b>Myths</b>	<b>Facts</b>
Lice are easy to get	Lice are spread only by head-to-head contact.
You can get lice from your dog, cat or other animal.	Lice are species specific. You can get human lice only from another human. You cannot get another animal's lice.
Lice are often passed via hats and other head accessories.	Rare, but possible. Hairbrushes, pillows and sheets are more common modes of transmission.
Lice can jump or fly from one person to another.	Lice can only crawl. They cannot fly or jump. They must crawl from one person to another.
School is a common place for lice transmission.	School is very rare source of transmission. More common are family members, overnight guests and playmates that spent a large amount of time together.
Poor hygiene contributes to lice.	Hygiene makes absolutely no difference. You get lice by close personal contact with someone else who has lice, not from being dirty.
Any nits left in the hair can cause lice to come back.	Any nits farther away than ½ inch on the hair shaft are <b>already hatched</b> and pose no risk to others.
Eggs or nits can fall out of the hair, hatch and cause lice in another person.	Nits are cemented to the hair and very hard to remove. They cannot fall off. Newly hatched larvae must find a head quickly or will die.
Lice can live a long time.	Lice live only 1 to 2 days off the head.
All members of a family should be treated if one person has lice.	Only the person with lice should be treated. Lice shampoos are insecticides and can be dangerous if used incorrectly or too frequently. Household members and close contacts should be checked, but only treat those who actually have lice.
Lice spread disease.	Lice do not spread disease.
Checking a classroom when one student has lice can prevent lice from spreading.	Classroom transmission is <b>rare</b> and a waste of valuable educational time. Checking family members and close playmates is much more appropriate.