



SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE CHATHAMS

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Myths and Facts about Head Lice	
Myth	Fact
Head lice carry disease	<i>Head lice do not spread disease.ⁱ</i>
Head lice can jump and fly	<i>Lice crawl. They are anatomically incapable of hopping, jumping or flying.ⁱⁱ</i>
Head lice are a sign of poor hygiene	<i>The cleanliness of a household or an individual has no bearing on the incidence of lice.ⁱⁱⁱ</i>
School is a common place for the transmission of lice	<i>School is rarely a source of transmission. Since head-to-head contact is more likely among close personal contacts (family members, overnight guests and playmates), research shows that private homes are the more likely place for head lice transmission.^{iv}</i>
Head lice can be spread by pets	<i>Lice are species-specific. The human head louse can only be passed from human to human.^v</i>
Head lice can be passed from one person to another by sharing hats or helmets, hair brushes, clothing or other personal items	<i>Research has shown that head lice are rarely passed by contact with personal items. Head-to-head contact is the usual mode of transmission.^{vi}</i>
Mayonnaise and olive oil treatments are effective in getting rid of lice infestations	<i>Scientific research does not support the use of many home remedies in getting rid of a lice infestation.^{vii} Speak to your healthcare provider about treatment options, including prescription treatments that are available and highly effective.</i>
Nits left in the hair can cause lice to come back	<i>Once a nit is more than one quarter inch away from the scalp, it is no longer viable. Nits that are farther away from the scalp are already hatched and will pose no risk to others.^{viii}</i>
If an egg or nit falls out of the hair, it can hatch and cause an lice infestation in another person	<i>Nits cannot fall out of the hair, because they are cemented to the hair shaft. A newly hatched louse cannot survive away from the head.^{ix}</i>
It is easy to get head lice	<i>Since lice are spread by head-to-head contact, they are harder to acquire than the common cold, influenza, strep throat, pink eye or impetigo.^x</i>

ⁱ (Centers for Disease Control, 2010)

ⁱⁱ (Frankowski, 2010)

ⁱⁱⁱ (Centers for Disease Control, 2010)

^{iv} (Aston, 2002) (NASN Head Lice 101: What You Should Know About Head Lice, 2013)

^v (Centers for Disease Control, 2010)

^{vi} (Frankowski, 2010)

^{vii} (NASN Head Lice 101: What You Should Know About Head Lice, 2013)

^{viii} (Centers for Disease Control, 2010)

^{ix} (Centers for Disease Control, 2010)

^x (Pontius, 2011)