

## **FAST FACTS**

- Even though they are extremely small, both lice and their eggs can be seen with the naked eye.
- Lice eggs are called "nits".
- A single female produces between 80 and 100 eggs in her lifetime.
- Most of these "nits" will hatch within 7-11 days and reach adulthood within 8-9 days after that.
- The new adult lice will live for about 22 more days.
- A single host can be infested by thousands of lice at one time!

## **General Information**

There are over 500 different species of sucking lice. The most commonly found species of sucking lice are "head lice" and "crab lice". They get their name because their mouths are designed specifically to suck blood.

<p><b>Size</b> 1/12"</p> <p><b>Shape</b> Seed like</p> <p><b>Color</b> Whitish</p> <p><b>Legs</b> 6</p> <p><b>Wings</b> No</p> <p><b>Antenna</b> Yes</p>	<p><b>Common Name</b> Sucking Lice</p> <p><b>Kingdom</b> Animalia</p> <p><b>Phylum</b> Arthropoda</p> <p><b>Class</b> Insecta</p> <p><b>Order</b> Phthiraptera</p> <p><b>Family</b> Pediculidae</p> <p><b>Genus Species</b> Pediculus humanus</p>
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## **Diet**

Sucking lice are parasites. They feed on blood and *only* appear on mammals. Most species of Sucking lice prefer to feed off rodents. "Head lice" and "crab lice" are more commonly found on humans.

## **Habitat**

The only way "head lice" can get food and water is by sucking blood from the scalp but they can be found on other parts of the body. They can spread from one person to the next through contact with bedding, clothing or by sharing combs. "Head lice" are common problems in crowded places, such as elementary schools, since children tend to share clothing more and frequently come into close contact with each other.

"Crab lice" are usually found in other areas containing hair, such as beards, eyebrows, armpits and the pubic region. "Crab lice" aren't as common in places such as schools, since they can only be spread through direct physical contact.

## **Impact**

Hundreds of years ago, due to lack of hygiene and over crowding in dirty conditions, lice were considered deadly because they carried deadly diseases such as **Typhus**. Today, Sucking lice are not really considered a health threat, but their bites may result in itching and redness around the area of the bite.

If you suspect exposure to lice, wash all clothes, bedding, combs, towels, etc. You can also use special combs, shampoos and conditioners designed specifically to treat lice. Also, try saturating hair with baby oil at night to kill both lice and their eggs. If you do this, wrap a towel around your head to keep from soiling your bedding and be sure to wash your hair thoroughly in the morning.

**See other side for suggestion on preventing this pest.**



# SUCKING LICE INFO SHEET

## **Prevention**

- \* Avoid using other individuals' combs, hats, towels, etc.
- \* Have someone check your scalp at least once a month to make sure you haven't been exposed.

To learn more about this and other lice, visit <http://www.pestworldforkids.org/lice.html>