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Tips to Tackle Head Lice

Now that school is back in session, there is one thing - or several things - parents would rather their child not bring home: head lice. While Dr. Kelly Hood of Lamorinda Pediatrics recommends first using over-the-counter permethrin 1% (Nix) or pyrethrins (Rid), she says to be sure to retreat on day nine, even if the instructions say otherwise. "If lice persist, consider prescription treatment and steer away from natural insecticides like ylang ylang and tea tree oil, since there is not enough evidence showing that these work or are safe," she says. "Some non-drug options that suffocate lice (Cetaphil, etc.), or manual removal with wet combing alone are becoming more accepted. These techniques are suggested for infants under 2 months old, if other options aren't effective, or for parents who want to avoid pesticides. Don't be surprised if you are seeing more kids with head lice staying in school. By the time the lice are spotted the child has been infected for about a month." J. Wake

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