Pediculus (Head house)

Classification

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Arthropoda

Class: Insecta

Order: Psocodea

Family: Pediculidae

Genus: *Pediculus*

For Further details link

Habit and habitat

Feeding: Head lice feed on human blood up to five times daily.

Head lice can only survive for about 24 hours to a couple of days off the human body, as they need human blood to survive.

Location: Head lice live on the human scalp, particularly behind the ears and near the nape of the neck.

Attachment: They have hook-like claws on their legs that help them cling to hair shafts.

Life cycle

- The life cycle of the head louse has three stages: egg, nymph, and adult.
- **Eggs:** Nits are head lice eggs. They are hard to see and are often confused for dandruff or hair spray droplets. Nits are laid by the adult female and are cemented at the base of the hair shaft nearest the scalp.
- They are 0.8 mm by 0.3 mm, oval and usually yellow to white. Nits take about 1 week to hatch (range 6 to 9 days). Viable eggs are usually located within 6 mm of the scalp.
- **Nymphs:** The egg hatches to release a nymph .
- The nit shell then becomes a more visible dull yellow and remains attached to the hair shaft. The nymph looks like an adult head louse, but is about the size of a pinhead. Nymphs mature after three molts (and become adults about 7 days after hatching.
- **Adults:** The adult louse is about the size of a sesame seed, has 6 legs (each with claws), and is tan to grayish-white .
- In persons with dark hair, the adult louse will appear darker. Females are usually larger than males and can lay up to 8 nits per day. Adult lice can live up to 30 days on a person's head. To live, adult lice need to feed on blood several times daily. Without blood meals, the louse will die within 1 to 2 days off the host.
- **Body lice:** Body lice are morphologically similar to head lice. They have a different life cycle, whereas body lice reside on and lay their eggs on the clothing and fomites of infected individuals and migrate to the human body to feed.