

Pubic Lice		
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SKIN AND SOFT TISSUE INFECTIONS

Pubic Lice

(CKS)

Pediculosis pubis (pubic lice) is often transmitted through sexual intercourse and/or close and intimate contact.

Consideration should be given to the possibility that the patient may be at risk of other genital infections. Carry out appropriate screening or refer to Integrated Sexual Health Services.

Advise the person to:

- Decontaminate clothes and bed linen by washing items in hot water ($\geq 50^{\circ}\text{C}$), dry cleaning or placing them in a sealed plastic bag for at least a week to kill the lice — mattresses should be vacuumed.
- Avoid close body contact, sexual contact and sharing of clothes, bedding and personal hygiene products until they (and their partner[s]) have successfully completed treatment.
- Patient information is available from NHS A-Z "[Pubic lice](#)".

Treatment:

Treatment options are available to buy over the counter.

Alcohol lotions are not recommended.

A second treatment is needed after 7 days to kill lice emerging from surviving eggs.

Medication ¹	Dosage	Duration
<i>Adults and children aged 6 months and over:</i>		
Malathion 0.5% aqueous lotion (Derbac-M [®]) Available to buy OTC	Apply to whole body (pay particular attention to all hairy areas including beards and moustaches; avoid any other areas above the neck), allow to dry naturally. Wash off after 12 hours or after leaving overnight.	Repeat after 7 days
<i>Adults over 18yrs only:</i>		
Permethrin 5% dermal cream (Lyclear [®]) Available to buy OTC	Apply to whole body, allow to dry naturally. Wash off after 12 hours or after leaving overnight.	Repeat after 7 days.

¹ See [BNF](#) for appropriate use and dosing in specific populations, e.g., hepatic, or renal impairment, pregnancy and breastfeeding.

Infestation of eyelashes can also occur and should be treated with yellow soft paraffin or petroleum jelly.

Advise the person to self-examine for the presence of live lice (not nits) one week after completion of treatment to ensure that all lice have been killed. A different insecticide should be used if a course of treatment fails.

Pruritus may persist for several days or weeks after treatment, especially if skin is excoriated.

Version Control- Crab lice			
Version	Author(s)	Date	Changes
V2.1	Nichola Butcher Specialist MO Interface Pharmacist	17/11/22	Added self-care information and link to NHS patient information. Added information about pruritus continuing after treatment added. Added self-examination advise after treatment. Changed guideline name from crab lice to pubic lice. Added advice to buy OTC