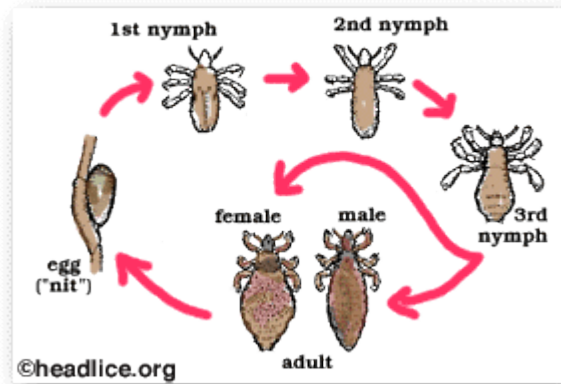


# Lice Awareness Wednesday

## Lousology 101

### Images & Biology of Head Lice

**Which Came First...  
the Itchin' or the Egg?**



(The Life-Cycle of the Head Louse)

- Nits (the eggs of the head louse) are small yellowish-white, oval-shaped eggs that are "to the side of a hair shaft glued" at an angle
- Nits must be laid by live lice. You cannot "catch nits."
- Once laid, it takes 7-10 days for a nit to hatch, and another 7-10 days for the female to mature and begin laying her own eggs.
- Head lice are clear in color when hatched, then quickly develop a reddish-brown color after feeding.
- Head lice are about the size of sesame seeds.
- Head lice have six legs equipped with claws to grasp the hair.
- Head lice are crawling insects. They cannot hop, jump, or fly.
- Head lice do not thrive on pets.
- Head lice are small, wingless insects which feed on human blood. They need human blood in order to survive.
- Head lice live for approximately 30 days on a host and a female louse may lay up to 100 nits (eggs).
- Head lice off of their human hosts will starve. The NPA suggests that, in most cases, a head louse will not survive for more than 24 hours off of its human host.