



Microorganism

- A parasite, *Pthirus pubis*, also called pubic louse or crab louse
- A strictly human-specific pathogen
- It attaches to large diameter hairs, which explains its preferential location in the **genital and anal regions**. Pthiriasis can affect other areas: axillary, pectoral, ciliary, and scalp.
- The survival time of *Pthirus pubis* in the external environment depends on the form:
 - Adult lice < 24 hours
 - Nits < 8 days

Transmission

- Contamination occurs almost exclusively through **close physical contact**, particularly during sexual intercourse.
- Indirect object transmission is also possible (e.g., linen, bedding...)

Clinical presentation

- **Pruritus** is the main manifestation of pthiriasis
- Scratching lesions are possible. These may become impetiginized and be accompanied by inguinal lymphadenopathy.
- **Eyelash involvement** may be accompanied by conjunctivitis and/or blepharitis.

Diagnosis

- The diagnosis is clinical and based on the visualization of lice and nits.
- A complete assessment of bacterial and viral STIs is systematic: HIV, hepatitis B, syphilis, *Chlamydia trachomatis*, gonorrhea...

Treatment

- Treatment is based on local or general antiparasitic medication in almost all cases, combined with non-specific measures.
- Antiparasitics

Localized form	1 st line	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permethrin cream 5%: 1 application, to be repeated after 7 to 10 days • Dimethicone lotion: 1 application, to be repeated after 7 to 10 days
	2 nd line	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check for re-infestation and ensure partners have been treated • Change the therapeutic class
	3 rd line	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check for re-infestation and ensure partners have been treated • Ivermectin 200 µg/kg in 1 dose, to be repeated after 7 to 10 days
Profuse form		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ivermectin 200 µg/kg in 1 dose, to be repeated after 7 to 10 days
Eyelash involvement	1 st line	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manual removal of lice and nits • Vaseline: 1 application 2 times a day on the eyelashes → for 10 days
	2 nd line	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ivermectin 200 µg/kg in 1 dose, to be repeated after 7 to 10 days



Non-specific measures

- Hair removal (shaving, waxing) of the affected areas
 - Removing nits with a fine-tooth comb and/or tweezers
 - Washing clothes and bedding at 60°C
- Informing partners should be encouraged to facilitate screening and treatment if infestation is detected.

Follow up

- Healing is assessed based on the improvement of symptoms.

Prevention

Prevention of pthiriasis is part of **combined prevention strategies**, which include:

- Risk reduction counseling
- Use of protective measures: condoms...
- Vaccinations against STIs as recommended (hepatitis A, hepatitis B, papillomavirus)
- HIV prevention through PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) if eligible
- STI screening as recommended AND treatment of all detected STIs