

Selfies Spawn Head Lice, Russian Region Warns

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Russia's consumer rights watchdog warns selfies 'spread head lice.'

As 2014 draws to a close, it seems the selfie hasn't been the only pandemic to spread like wildfire this year, with some Russian authorities blaming the photographic phenomenon for a worrying outbreak of head lice.

"According to experts, the reason for the spread of lice among teenagers is their love of 'selfie photographs,' in which teenagers ... facilitate the transmission of parasites by touching heads during a group photo," the Kursk branch of the Rospotrebnadzor health and safety watchdog said Wednesday in an online statement.

The agency added that modern Russians have no excuses for spreading head lice, given that contemporary standards of personal hygiene are so high, relatively speaking.

Uniquely, the statement then delved into a brief history of head lice: "Every resident of

medieval Europe was infected with head lice, and as a treatment used mercury — they ate it and rubbed it into their skin,” the Kursk authorities wrote.

However, lice sufferers reading this article and hoping for a quick solution should be warned: Russia became a signatory last month to the Minamata Convention on Mercury, committing to phase out use of the poisonous metal by 2030.

Moreover, despite all the focus on teenagers, it isn't just youngsters who have taken a shine to the selfie phenomenon.

Tech-savvy Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev made headlines in July after posting his first Instagram selfie, while President Vladimir Putin also appeared in a selfie snap alongside a young boy earlier this year.

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