

Written Notification to Parents about Head Lice

In a screening examination at school, your child was found to have head lice. It was noted that your child has either nits (white eggs firmly attached to hairs) or lice (gray bugs approximately 1/15" long, move quickly and are difficult to see). Head lice do not carry disease nor does their presence indicate that your child is dirty. However, to prevent further spread in the school, this condition needs to be treated at once. You are encouraged to follow the recommendations given below or contact your local health department or your physician for their recommendations.

HELPFUL HINTS

The major sign of head lice is persistent itching of the scalp. Although it's hard to see the lice, you can see the nits. Nits are most often found behind the ears and at the nape of the neck. Also, look for scratch marks and/or irritated skin. Nits are not like dandruff. They do not brush off and are firmly cemented to the hair follicle.

HOW THEY SPREAD

Lice do not fly or jump, but they spread quickly. You can "catch" head lice through:

1. Direct contact with an infested person or stray hairs that have nits.
2. Personal items such as combs, brushes, other hair-care items, towels, bed linens.
3. Indirect contact such as infested clothing (including hats, scarves, coats, sweaters, hair ribbons, plus other hair coverings that are shared); lying on infested carpets, beds, stuffed animals, or upholstered furniture.

ACTION BY SCHOOL

If lice or nits are found, the child will be sent home immediately. If the child has any personal items at school, the items will be sent home for proper cleaning.

TREATMENT

Use either an over-the-counter lice treatment product, (can be purchased from a local drugstore or the health department), or contact your family physician for a prescription medication. **Follow the package directions for proper treatment.**

Check the heads of everyone living in your home; if there is evidence of lice and/or nits they will need to be treated at the same time. Very small children and people with asthma or allergies will need to consult a doctor for treatment.

Cleaning the house: Lice can't live for more than 72 hours off the human body. Vacuum floors, carpeting, mattresses, and upholstered furniture. Be sure to remove the vacuum bag after cleaning and place it in a plastic bag for discard. Any clothes, hats, etc., that were worn by the infected person, needs to be washed in hot water (above 150 degrees) and dried in the dryer 20 minutes, or you can use professional dry cleaning. Items that cannot be washed and placed in a dryer; need to be sealed in an airtight plastic bags for 3 weeks. Disinfect combs, brushes, and similar items by **a.** soaking in the medicated shampoo, **or b.** soaking in ammonia or a 2 % Lysol solution, **or c.** boiling in water for 20 minutes.

Dead nits do not fall off the hair after treatment. A clean fine-toothed comb will help to remove nits after shampooing. All nits must be removed from the hair. Otherwise, it is possible to be reinfected even if a few eggs survive. The eggs can hatch in 7 to 10 days and the cycle starts over again. Using a mixture of half vinegar and half rubbing alcohol will help loosen the nits. There is also a cream rinse on the market that helps wash away the nits. Any nits that were not removed from the person's hair with a comb, need to be removed by hand. Place these eggs on a damp paper towel. Afterwards, throw the paper towel in a trash bag and discard. Wash your hands thoroughly.

SCHOOL RE-ENTRANCE

The student may be readmitted after one treatment and proof of treatment must be brought to school (box top or empty bottle). Note from parent is not acceptable. The child will be reexamined by the nurse or designated school personnel upon return to school. If nits are still present, the child will be sent home until all nits are gone.

FOLLOW-UP RECOMMENDATIONS

Depending upon the medication used for the initial treatment, it may be recommended to repeat the shampoo in 7-10 days.

Please call the school if you have any questions.

Adopted: November 11, 2002

Amended: April 18, 2011