

Instructions for Parents/Guardians

Head lice could come from almost anywhere a classmate, another child's clothing, hats, or combs and brushes. Lice outbreaks are common among schoolchildren and even the cleanest child can easily become infested.

- **Check every member of the family.**

It is important that you inspect all family members for at least 2 weeks. This procedure will help reduce the spread to other family members. Head lice should be suspected when there is intense itching and scratching of the scalp and the back of the neck. If you look closely at the scalp, you will see small whitish eggs firmly attached to the hair shaft, especially at the nape of the neck and above the ears. Although these eggs may look like dandruff, dandruff can easily be removed from the hair while the eggs are not even easily removed by pulling.

- **Use an effective head lice treatment.**

Follow the directions on the lice treatment carefully.

- **Remove all nits.**

A fine toothbed comb is needed to remove the louse egg and to break the chain of infection. Gently comb the child's hair with the special nit removal comb. **Constant inspection** for nits for at least 2 weeks is advisable. Current research shows that lice and nits are becoming more resistant to available pediculides (shampoos). **Reinfestation may occur if only one viable nit remains on the hair shaft.** After fertilization, adult female lice firmly attach the nits to the hair shaft with a cement-like substance. To prevent reinfestation, it is essential to dislodge the nit from the hair shaft.

- **Wash clothes, coats, bed linens and towels.**

Use hot water (at least 130 degrees F) to wash all bedding (blankets, sheets, pillow cases) and personal clothing including pajamas of your child and any other infected family members. Dry on hot cycle for at least 20 minutes. Items not washable must be dry cleaned or stored at room temperature in a tightly sealed plastic bag for at least 2 weeks. Items such as headphone and helmets should be similarly bagged and stored.

- **Soak combs, brushes, etc. in hot water.**

At least 130 degrees F; the hotter the better. Items should be allowed to soak for 5-10 minutes.

- **Vacuum everywhere.**

To make sure the rest of your home is louse free, you should vacuum carpets pillows, mattresses, upholstered furniture, and even the car seats.

Head lice cannot survive without a human host. They cannot survive on family pets.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate call the school nurse during school hours.

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