

Head Lice

Head lice are parasites that can adhere to the hair of humans. In both adult and young forms they lay eggs called nits on the hair shafts. They feed on human blood and can cause itching. Excessive scratching can lead to abrasion of the skin or crusting. It is important to note that head lice do not transmit other infections such as bacteria or viruses. They are a nuisance and do not have any serious health consequences.

Head lice cannot be completely eliminated from communities or schools. The home is the primary point of control. Children should be inspected on a regular basis for lice by their parents. When a case of head lice is discovered, please follow the treatment procedure below.

PROCEDURE FOR TREATMENT:

1. Apply lice shampoo, also called pediculicide, to hair, according to product instructions.
If your child has extra long hair (longer than shoulder length), you may need to use a second bottle. Pay special attention to instructions on the bottle regarding how long the medication should be left on and whether rinsing the hair is recommended after treatment.
Note: Do not use a crème rinse or combination shampoo/conditioner before using lice medicine. Do not re-wash hair for 1-2 days after treatment.
2. **Print off the form at the end of these instructions. Write the name of the product that you used on the printed form Please complete and return this to the nurse upon return to school. (or write the information on a separate paper).**
3. Have the infested person put on clean clothing after treatment.
4. If a few live lice are still found 8-12 hours after treatment, but are moving more slowly than before, do not repeat the treatment. Comb dead and remaining live lice out of the hair.
5. If, after 8-12 hours of treatment, no dead lice are found and lice seem as active as before, the treatment may not be working. See your health care provider for a different medication; follow product directions.
6. Nit combs(nits are the eggs of head lice), often included in lice treatment packages, should be used to comb nits and lice from the hair shaft. Removing nits will help prevent re-infestation and/or help in identifying if re-infestation has occurred.
7. After treatment, check hair, and comb daily with a nit comb to remove nits and lice. Continue to check daily for 2-3 weeks until you are sure all lice and nits are gone. Then continue to check on a weekly basis.
8. If using an over-the-counter product, repeat treatment in 7-10 days.

TREATING THE HOUSEHOLD: Lice do not survive long if they fall off a person's head. Follow these steps to help avoid re-infestation by lice that have recently fallen off the hair or crawled onto clothing or furniture.

1. To kill lice and nits, machine wash all washable clothing and bed linens that the infested person wore or used during the 2 days before treatment. Use the hot water cycle. Dry laundry using high heat for at least 20 minutes.
2. Dry clean clothing that is not washable,
OR store all clothing, stuffed animals, comforters, etc., that cannot be washed or dry cleaned, in a plastic bag and seal for 2 weeks.
3. Soak combs and brushes for 1 hour in rubbing alcohol, Lysol*, or wash with soap and hot (130 F.) water.
4. The risk of getting re-infested from lice that have fallen onto the carpet or furniture is very small. After vacuuming the places where the infested person usually sits or lies down, it is most effective to direct your energy to the daily attention of the infested child.

PREVENT RE-INFESTATION: Lice are most commonly spread directly by head-to-head contact and much less frequently by crawling onto clothing or belongings. As a short-term measure to control outbreaks in community settings, teach children to avoid activities that are likely to spread lice.

- Avoid head-to-head contact common during play (sports activities, playground, slumber parties, camp, church)
- Do not share clothing, such as hats, scarves, coats, sports uniforms, or hair ribbons.
- Do not share combs, brushes or towels.
- Until cleaned, do not lie on beds, couches, pillows, carpets, or stuffed animals that have recently been in contact with an infested person.

For more information and answers to common questions, check with your school nurse or go to the following website:

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dpd/parasites/lice/default.htm>

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Child's Name _____

Treatment for lice (pediculosis) has been started on my child with the use of the following product (lice shampoo): _____.

I have followed the product directions and understand that treatment does not end with this procedure. I understand that daily checks and removing any remaining nits/lice are necessary for the effectiveness of treatment.

Parent Signature _____ **Date** _____