

## PARENT GUIDELINES FOR PEDICULOSIS (Head lice and nits)

If a lice infestation is confirmed the parent/guardian will be notified to pick their student up at the earliest opportunity. A letter will be sent home with the child to explain the condition and the requirements for readmission.

Prior to readmission, satisfactory evidence must be provided to school personnel that the student has been treated for pediculosis (head lice). This evidence may include proof of purchase for OTC treatments, proof of prescription medication usage, and/or determination (after examination) by a school official that there has been improvement (meaning reduction/elimination of live lice and nits near the scalp) since the parent/guardian was notified.

A student shall be expected to return to school no later than the day following notification of the condition. The student will be excused the day the student dismisses early and the day following, if necessary for proper treatment.

Failure to meet these requirements shall result in the student's exclusion until criteria are met for readmission. **These absences will not be excused.**

### What you need to know about lice:

- Head lice are wingless insects, they do not fly or jump, live close to the scalp, and **DO NOT** transmit disease.
- Lice are a nuisance and not a medical concern
- Lice and their eggs do not burrow into the scalp
- The American Academy of Pediatrics states, in a May 2015 "Pediatrics" publication, that most **cases of head lice are acquired outside the school setting**, although the school nurse is often the first to detect the infestation. Transmission requires direct, head to head contact and typically occurs during sleepovers, camps, childcare facilities, etc...
- The presence of lice does not indicate unsanitary living conditions or poor hygiene
- The chance of transmission of head lice from shared helmets, headphones, shared lockers or coat hooks is miniscule

### How to treat head lice:

- Ordinary shampoo and constant washing ARE NOT effective
- Head lice must be treated with pediculicide products (lice-killing treatment). Several over-the-counter products are available at your local drug store, please consult the pharmacist if you need assistance in choosing a brand
- Another option is to have your healthcare provider write a prescription, which may be the best option in chronic infestations
- Carefully read & follow ALL instructions accompanying the treatment

- Remove nits (eggs), especially those close to the scalp, to reduce the chance of re-infestation

### **What about cleaning:**

- All household members and close contacts should be checked and treated if infestation is present.
- Vacuum floor & furniture where the infested person sat or slept.
- Bed linens and recently used clothes, hats & towels as well as personal articles (combs, brushes, hair clips, etc...) should be washed in very hot water or sealed in plastic bag for 2 weeks.
- Fumigants or fogs ARE NOT necessary and could be dangerous if inhaled or absorbed through the skin.

### **How to prevent re-infestation:**

- Check for live lice & nits daily for 10 days at home.
- Remove nits (eggs) from hair, especially those close to the scalp.
- Re-apply the lice treatment, per package recommendations, within 7-10 days.
- Check for nits 14 days after 2<sup>nd</sup> treatment.

The following links will provide additional information.

<https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/treatment.html>

<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/135/5/e1355>

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter. Contact your school nurse if you have any questions or need any further assistance.

Ref: American Academy of Pediatrics,  
<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/126/2/392.full.html>  
NASN, Headfirst Lice Lessons, Head Lice 101  
TN Dpt. of Education, Rule 1200-14-01-.24