



Dear Parents,

We would like to update everyone on the current suggested treatment and precautions for lice. Acquiring lice has nothing to do with cleanliness; in fact, lice prefer a clean, healthy head. Anyone, adult or child can get head lice. Please check your children regularly for lice, especially if they are scratching their heads. Head lice are passed from person to person by direct contact or on shared objects (combs, towels, barrettes, headphones, etc.) so every member of the family should be checked. The most common symptom of infestation is intense itching on the back of the head or neck. Head lice cannot survive on family pets, or without a human host. There is little evidence to support that lice carry disease.

- **Check every member of the family.** Lice are hard to spot, so start by looking for their eggs (nits). They are tiny beige, cream, or grey colored, stuck firmly to the hair shaft. They prefer behind the ears, and along the neck, but can be laid anywhere.
- **Use an effective head lice treatment recommended by your pediatrician if you find a live louse or nits.** Follow the directions on the bottle exactly.
- **Everyday for 14 days, gently comb and check the hair shafts for nits and remove them.** Nits that are 1/8th-1/2 inch from the scalp were recently laid. Those found a couple of inches from the scalp tend to be empty or not viable. Eggs hatch in 8 days, therefore it is important to be vigilant. A second insecticide treatment is permitted no sooner than the 7th day. Treat a second time only if a live louse is observed. Continue monitoring for 2 weeks.
- **Wash clothes, bed linens, and towels.** Use hot water, and dry on the hot cycle for at least 20 minutes. Items such as stuffed animals, pillows, bedspreads, and headphones that are not machine washable must be dry-cleaned or stored at room temperature in a tightly sealed plastic bag for at least two weeks. Lice cannot survive beyond a day or so once they are off their host. Nits are not viable beyond a week.
- **Soak combs, brushes, etc. in hot water.** The temperature should be at least 130 degrees F. Soak for 10 minutes.
- **Vacuum bed, carpets, sofas, car seat.**

Once the child has completed the shampoo and nit removal, he/she is allowed to return to school. Please come to the nurse's office first for a head check. These guidelines follow the recent Harvard Study on Lice and the American Academy of Pediatrics. If you have further questions or concerns, please call me.

Sincerely yours,
Nina Keller, RN
School Nurse

Dawn Thompson, MD
School Physician