



Information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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HEAD LICE INFORMATION FOR SCHOOLS

Students diagnosed with live head lice do not need to be sent home early from school. Students can go home at the end of the day, be treated, and return to class after appropriate treatment has begun. Nits may persist after treatment, but successful treatment should kill crawling lice. Parents should be called.

Head lice can be a nuisance but they have not been shown to spread disease. Personal hygiene or cleanliness in the home or school has nothing to do with getting head lice.

Both the American Association of Pediatrics and the National Association of School Nurses advocate that “no-nit” policies should be discontinued. “No-nit” policies that require a child to be free of nits before they can return to school should be discontinued for the following reasons:

- Many nits are more than ¼ inch from the scalp. Such nits are usually not viable and very unlikely to hatch to become crawling lice, or may in fact be empty shells, also known as casings.
- Nits are cemented to hair shafts and are very unlikely to be transferred successfully to other people.
- The burden of unnecessary absenteeism to the students, families and communities far outweighs the risks associated with head lice.
- Misdiagnosis of nits is very common during nit checks conducted by nonmedical personnel.

SCHOOL STAFF CARE OF HEAD LICE

1. If staff sees head lice (eggs/live lice) – call home and notify parents. Explain head lice care/treatment, then send home head lice information with the student at the end of the school day.
2. When student returns to school, recheck head. If there are still live lice, call parent. Ask if student has been treated and what has been done to get rid of the lice and/or eggs. Students will stay in school until the end of the day.
3. Recheck the student the next day or when student returns. If there are still live lice, call the school nurse for assistance.

For Questions: Please contact your school nurse.