

This newsletter is being brought you by the Grandview School Nurses. This newsletter addresses the revisions to our head lice protocol reflecting the standards of practice recommended by the Center for Disease Control, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the National Association of School Nurses.

What Are Head Lice?

Head lice (pediculosis capitus) are tiny insects that feed solely on the blood of people. Lice are detected by the presence of adult lice or nits (eggs) attached to the hair shaft of the host. Lice cannot burrow into the skin and do not play a role in transmitting any disease.

Myths	Facts
Lice are easy to get.	Lice are spread only by direct head-to-head contact.
Lice are often passed from hats and helmets.	Rare, but possible. Hairbrushes, pillow, and sheets are much more common modes of transmission.
School is a common place for lice transmission.	School is rarely a source of transmission. Much more common are family members and sleepovers.
Poor hygiene contributes to lice.	Hygiene makes absolutely no difference. Lice are transmitted by close personal contact with someone who has lice.
Lice can jump or fly from one person to another.	Lice can only crawl. They can neither fly nor jump. They must crawl from one person to another.
Any nits left in the hair can cause lice to come back.	Any nits farther away than one-half inch from the scalp on the hair shaft are not alive and pose no risk.
Lice can live a long time.	A louse (singular for lice) that falls off the head will very likely die within hours. A louse needs the warmth and blood supply of the human scalp to live.
All members of a family should be treated if one person has lice.	Household members and close contacts should be checked, but only treat those who actually have lice . Lice shampoos and insecticides can be dangerous if used incorrectly or too frequently. The house should not be sprayed with insecticide, nor should insecticides be used on clothing or other items.
Checking a classroom when one student has lice can prevent lice from spreading.	Classroom transmission is rare. Group screenings take away from valuable learning time and are rarely effective.
Lice spread disease.	Lice are a nuisance but do not spread any known disease.

*Table Adapted from "Hats Off to Success, Changing Head Lice Policy," by D.J. Pontius, 2011, *NASN School Nurse*, p. 359. Copyright 2011 by Sage Publishing.

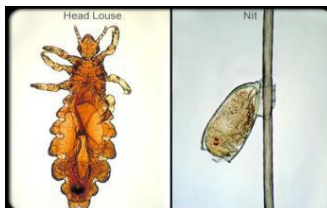
The Role of the School Nurse

When head lice are identified on a student:

- The School Nurse will evaluate the severity of the infestation to determine if the student should be sent home immediately or at the end of the school day.
- Student with nits may remain in school and parents will be contacted.
- Parents will be educated in the procedure to eliminate head lice.
- Students will be checked before returning to class for nits and live lice.
- School Nurse will use current best practice guidelines to determine whether student may return to class.
- Parents will not be routinely notified of cases of lice in classrooms due to privacy concerns and the low risk of transmission of lice.

What If My Child Gets Head Lice?

- If your child has been identified as having head lice your school nurse will talk with you about current treatment options.
- If you discover head lice in your child at home, contact your school nurse.
- Follow treatment instructions, including careful combing with a lice comb, nit removal and daily re-checks for lice and nits.
- Check other family members but **do not treat unless active head lice are identified.**
- Family bed linens and recently used clothes, hats and towels should be washed in very hot water. Personal items such as brushes, combs, and hair clips should also be washed in hot soapy water or thrown away if they were exposed to the person with an active head lice infestation.
- Stuffed animals and soft toys can be placed in a hot dryer for 60 minutes.
- Do not use environmental sprays; they can be toxic if inhaled or absorbed through the skin.
- Consult your school nurse or pediatrician if you have any questions.



Head lice are common in school aged children. Though lice may be a nuisance, they are not dangerous and do not spread any disease.