

HEAD LICE

It is a yearly occurrence in every school, an inevitable part of growing up in a community. There is no need for embarrassment, as head lice will likely affect every child at some point. However, there are ways to minimize its spread. It's crucial to inform the school so that we can promptly check all students and prevent one case from turning into an outbreak.

How can I determine if my child has head lice?

Head lice firmly attach themselves to the hair shaft base. Their eggs, called nits, appear as tiny white or dark oval-shaped objects, most noticeable around the base of the hair shafts behind the ears and at the nape of the neck, causing redness and itching. Head lice are typically transmitted through close contact or sharing combs, brushes, or other hair-related items with an infected person. They cannot survive away from a host for more than 48 hours.

There are various treatments available on the market. Whichever treatment you choose, it must always be accompanied by thorough combing. You can purchase a fine-toothed comb designed to remove head lice and nits. Don't assume that shampooing or combing once is sufficient. Always recheck over the following days to ensure complete eradication. Repeat the treatment after seven to nine days to address newly hatched nits.

PROCEDURE

- If a student is suspected of having head lice (due to an itchy scalp), he or she will be referred to the school nurse for a head lice screening.
- Students with confirmed head lice will be required to stay home until they begin treatment with lice shampoo.
- The school nurse will inform parents to pick up their child and provide instructions and guidance on head lice treatment. If parents are unavailable, the school nurse will contact a guardian.
- The school nurse will conduct lice screenings for the remaining students in the affected class.
- Parents of students in the affected class will receive notification from the school nurse via a letter.
- Students with head lice will undergo a follow-up examination by the school nurse upon their return to school the next day. If they still have an active infestation, they will be sent back home until they are lice-free.
- The school nurse will reexamine students who have been cleared of head lice within 14 calendar days.
- Students found to have head lice during the re-examination will again be required to stay home until they are lice-free.
- Students with nits (lice eggs) but no evidence of live head lice will typically not be required to stay home from school, but their parents or guardians will be notified.
- If a student has undergone treatment for head lice, as confirmed by his or her parents, a notification will be sent to the parents of students in the same grade or section. This notification will inform them about the case without revealing the affected student's name.