

FROM THE SCHOOL NURSE:



Pictures of the stages of a louse
Adult, Nymph and a Nit (egg) on hair

10 STEPS TO STAYING AHEAD OF HEAD LICE

- 1.) Watch for signs of head lice, such as frequent head scratching. Anyone can get head lice...mainly by head-to-head contact but also from sharing hats, brushes and headrests. Lice do not jump or fly.
- 2.) Check all family members for lice & nits (eggs) at least once a week. Only those infested should be treated. Lice are very small, reddish brown and difficult to see. It helps to use natural light & a magnifying glass.
- 3.) Nits are small yellowish-white, oval-shaped eggs that are “glued” at an angle to the hair shaft. Be sure not to confuse nits with hair debris such as hair casts stuck to the hair shaft that can be easily dislodged. Nits are difficult to remove.
- 4.) Once laid, it takes 7-10 days for a nit to hatch, & another 7-10 days for the female to mature & begin laying her own eggs. Head lice live for approximately 30 days on a host & a female louse may lay up to 100 nits. Lice cannot live off a human host longer than a few days.
- 5.) For treatment call your physician if the person involved is pregnant, nursing, has allergies, asthma, epilepsy, or has preexisting medical conditions. Never use a lice product on a baby.
- 6.) Remember lice-killing products are pesticides. Follow package directions carefully! Use the product over the sink. Keep the eyes covered with a washcloth.
- 7.) **Remove all nits** (which will stay on the hair after treatment) **This is the key step.** If you use the lice comb while the hair is wet, follow with manual removal using your fingernails. This is best done on dry hair, in natural light.
- 8.) Wash sheets, recently worn clothing, coats, and backpack in **hot water** & dry in a **hot dryer**. Combs & brushes may be soaked in **hot water** for 10 minutes.
- 9.) Avoid lice sprays! Vacuuming is the safest & best way to remove lice or fallen hairs with attached nits from upholstered furniture, rugs, stuffed animals and car seats.
- 10.) Continue to check heads every day for 3 weeks. The lice are often resistant to the shampoo. If you find more live lice re-treatment is necessary.

When you find a case of lice, tell others! Head lice is not a hygiene issue & communication is our best defense! Check for lice on a regular basis. This is the best way to protect your family and community.

Please contact me with any questions.

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