

Head Lice Control

Pediculosis (head lice) is a school-restricted disease.

Head lice is a common condition in the school-age child. It is highly contagious and easily spread from direct contact with infested persons and/or his or her personal items.

Requirements

Students who have signs and symptoms of head lice must be referred immediately to the principal.

1. What to look for:
 - a. Head lice are small, grayish-brown bugs about the size of a sesame seed.
 - b. They are difficult to see and move very quickly. They do not jump or fly.
 - c. The eggs are called nits and are cemented to the hair shaft. They are difficult to remove unlike dandruff or lint they will not blow off. Hair casts that they are sometimes mistaken for can be easily pulled off the hair shaft.
 - d. The adult female louse will lay her eggs anywhere on the hair shaft. The largest concentration is usually found behind the ears and at the base of the neck at the hair line.
2. When a child in school is found to have head lice, the administrator must:
 - a. Notify the student's parent and request that the student be removed from school.
 - b. Inform the parent that the student may not return to school without a statement signed by the parent that the child has been treated.
 - c. Provide the parent with a copy of the exclusion form for head lice.
 - d. Provide the parent with an informational brochure about head lice.
 - e. When absences exceed seven days in any semester the administrator will refer the student to the attendance officer.
3. The parent must accompany the student when he/she returns to school. The administrator, nurse or designated person will examine the student's head and assure that there are no nits before allowing the student to return to classes. This screening should be conducted in as private a location as possible.

The difficulty in determining if the nits are dead or alive makes it essential that all nits be removed before the student is allowed to return to class.

4. Classroom screening
 - a. The administrator should designate a staff member to do screening for head lice. The school nurse will then train these people to do the screening.
 - b. If a classroom has two or more confirmed cases of head lice, the teacher must arrange with the principal to have the designated person screen the class.
 - c. When a student is identified as having head lice, all brothers and sisters in the family who are attending school (contact secondary schools) should also be screened, as well as close friends.
 - d. The administrator shall notify parents of students in any classroom where one or more students are found to have head lice and is excluded as a result.

5. Referrals to school nurse:
 - a. When a student is identified as having head lice in three consecutive inspections, referral should be made to the school nurse as a chronic situation.
 - b. The administrator and school nurse may make alternative arrangements to meet educational needs in cases which have become chronic.