



NOTICE TO PARENTS REGARDING HEAD LICE

We have been informed that pediculosis (head lice) has been occurring in your child's classroom. Although it is next to impossible to determine where these small insects originate, we do know they can be transferred from person to person by the sharing of combs, brushes, or by close head contact.

The head lice themselves are difficult to locate, but symptoms are easy to recognize; persistent itching of scalp, infected scratch marks around scalp area. Close inspection reveals small white eggs (called nits), which are firmly attached to individual hairs and cannot be removed easily. Although these eggs may look like dandruff, dandruff can readily be removed from the hair, while the eggs are very difficult to detach. In checking the scalp, pay particular attention to the area behind the ears and back of the neck.

If you feel your child may have head lice, please contact the school where your child attends. Further instructions for treatment are contained below. Students who have head lice may return to school only when treatment has been completed. ***ALL live lice must be removed before the student returns to school. A CHILD RETURNING TO SCHOOL WITH LIVE LICE WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO STAY AT SCHOOL.***

Instructions for Treatment of Head Lice

Treatment

1. If lice are found on a family member, everyone in the home should be checked. Intimate contacts should be checked.
2. Only persons who have head lice should be treated. Please contact your health care provider for treatment of children under the age of three.
3. In November 1991, the California Department of Health Services issued a statement regarding the failure of Kwell shampoo which contains Lindane. Effective alternatives available in California are Ovide, a prescription drug containing malathion; Nix, a brand which contains a synthetic botanical insecticide called permethrin and is available over-the-counter (OTC); and the many other brands which have been available OTC containing the botanical insecticide, pyrethrum (A200 Pyrinate, RID, C&C, Triple-X, etc.) and many new products using non-toxic substances.
4. Apply the medicated shampoo according to the package directions.
5. Although it can take time and sometimes be difficult, **REMOVE ALL NITS** to ensure complete treatment. As products are not 100% effective in killing all nits, some may hatch into crawling lice within 7-11 days, generating a cycle of re-infestation. Nit removal can be accomplished with a special comb (Derac, Medi-Comb, and Innomed) or by picking them out with the fingernails. Nits can also be cut out with small safety scissors.
6. Regardless of precautions taken at home, re-infestation from others can still take place. ***It is important to recheck your child in 7 – 11 days. If lice or nits are present, you will need to retreat your child.*** Checking for nits should become part of routine personal hygiene. (As treatment itself can cause itching, do not re-treat on the basis of itchiness alone.)

Household Precautions

1. Wash clothing, bed linens, and towels in hot water with detergent or dry clean.
2. Clean combs and brushes well, and then wash in hot water with detergent. To stop the spread of lice, do not share combs, brushes, hats, coats, towels, etc.
3. Objects that cannot be cleaned by any of the above ways may be put in plastic bags and set aside for 14 days at room temperature. Lice should die away from their human host during this time.
4. Ordinary household cleaning and vacuuming will remove nits and lice from rugs and furniture. Lice sprays are only needed when there is a heavy infestation and household objects, such as upholstered furniture with deep folds, are hard to clean.