



Head Lice

Procedure for Control of Head Lice in Schools

It is necessary that efforts be made to effectively control head lice as soon as it becomes evident that a student may be infested. In order to keep a simple case of head lice (pediculosis) from turning into a widespread problem, there is a need for individuals to work together to eradicate the problem. School personnel and medical personnel must work cooperatively with students and parents to initiate the steps necessary to treat and eliminate head lice. Classroom teachers should report all suspected infestations to the health office. Control depends on prompt detection, proper administration, effective treatment and spread prevention.

The following procedures are to be followed when a student has been found to have head lice:

1. Parents are to be immediately contacted and the student excluded from school in order to receive proper treatment. Information shall be made available to the parents, including options for treatment with methods such as an anti-lice shampoo and other options for the student infested and the procedures to be followed to eliminate head lice in the home. If the child is unable to go home, the school will make reasonable efforts to minimize contact with other students for the remainder of the school day.
2. School age siblings of the student will be checked for head lice by school staff as soon as possible. If siblings attend another school in the district, that school's health office will be notified as soon as possible so that they can check the sibling.
3. An "awareness" letter will be sent home with all of the classmates of the identified student at the elementary school level. This letter will inform parents that a case of head lice was detected in their child's class and will provide general information about head lice and suggestions as to what parents can do to screen their own children for head lice. Such a letter will NOT provide the identity of the student found to have head lice. Such a letter will not be sent again if it had been sent within the previous 10 days.
4. Students will be readmitted to school ONLY after they have been checked by appropriate school staff and are found to be free of head lice. If the parents provide evidence of an appropriate treatment for head lice (e.g. an anti-lice shampoo bottle), the student may be readmitted to school if treated nits are present. Students will NOT be readmitted if head lice are present. It is the parents' responsibility to contact the school to schedule an appointment for a readmit check. Parents should accompany their child to school for such a readmit check.
5. Approximately one week after being readmitted for having had head lice, the student will be rechecked for head lice by school staff. If head lice are found, the process of exclusion will be initiated again.
6. In situations where the student has repeated cases of head lice, school personnel will contact the family to assist them in identifying means of effectively dealing with the issue and, where appropriate, make referrals to appropriate agencies.
7. Student attendance will be reviewed by the school administrator to determine if/when absences become excessive due to head lice. Excessive absences may be considered "unexcused" at the discretion of the school principal. Referrals may then be made to appropriate agencies regarding the student's attendance.