

“MANAGEMENT OF PEDICULOSIS INFORMATION”

HEAD LICE FACTS:

- Head lice can infest anyone, and prefer clean and healthy hair
- They are small and wingless, and are about the size of a sesame seed. They do not fly or jump, and are passed through direct contact, such as sleepovers, sports activities or camp, close play. Uncommonly, they may also spread by sharing hats/clothing/scarves, or sharing combs/brushes/towels, for example.
- Eggs look like very tiny grains of teardrop-shaped rice firmly attached to the hair shaft and hatch in 7 to 10 days
- Nits can look similar to dandruff, but they cannot be easily removed or brushed off
- Lice feed on blood every 3-6 hours
- ***The primary symptom of infestation is itching.*** Scratching is what can lead to sores around the scalp and neck/ears.
- Eggs dislodged/removed from the hair shaft and host will die within 2 weeks
- Off the scalp, adult head lice rarely survive beyond 36 hours
- Lice move quickly and shy away from light, especially during a head check
- They are most commonly found behind the ears and near the neckline at the back of the head
- Pets cannot get head lice or give head lice to humans
- Head lice are more a nuisance than a health hazard
- They are most common among children ages 3 to 11 years old

TREATMENT:

Speak to your Healthcare Provider (HCP) about treatment options. Your pharmacist and School Nurse are also resources for you. Information can be viewed at the following websites:

www.cdc.gov Centers for Disease Control

www.aap.org American Academy of Pediatrics

www.nasn.org National Association of School Nurses

www.njdoh.org NJ Department of Health

www.MayoClinic.org Mayo Clinic

- Follow treatment instructions. Using extra or multiple applications of the same medication is not recommended, unless directed by HCP.
- There is no scientific evidence that home remedies are effective treatment. Personal choice for treatment is supported by the School Nurse.
- All household members and other close contacts should be checked, and those with evidence of an active infestation should also be treated at the same time. Family members should be checked daily for at least two weeks.
- The home and car(s) should be cleaned thoroughly:
 1. Vacuum everywhere and then replace your vacuum bag with a new one; double bagging the used bag in plastic is a recommended option
 2. Use lint rollers in hard to reach areas
 3. Soak combs, brushes, hairbands in hot soapy water for 20 minutes
 4. Wash family bed linens and recently worn clothes, hats, and towels in very hot water.
 5. Things that cannot go into the washing machine, place in plastic bags and keep them sealed for two weeks untouched.
- Your child’s hair **MUST** be checked daily in the morning, before coming to school. Any student in school with live lice will be considered to still have active infestation.
- The child will also be checked daily by the School Nurse. Students with live lice will be sent home from school.
- Nits need to be removed daily by the parent/guardian *before coming to school*. Use a nit comb, or manually sliding the nit down/off the hair shaft also works. Some products help loosen the nits and make it easier for removal.
- Checking hair after waking in the morning also gives an indication if there are still live lice present. If all nits were removed the day before, and now more are found the next day, there are still live, active lice.

The School Nurse is always available for questions, and support.

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