

HEAD LICE (Pediculosis Capitis)

POLICY: Management of a student identified with an active head lice infestation has likely had the infestations for a month or more by the time it is discovered, poses little risk to others, and does not have a resulting health problem; he or she should remain in class but be discouraged from close direct head contact with others.

1. Confidentiality must be maintained.
2. The child's parent or guardian should be notified that day by telephone that prompt, proper treatment of this condition is in the best interest of the child and his or her classmates.
3. Students with nits/live lice will be allowed to return to school after proper treatment with KWELL, STEP 2, NIX, R&C or other pediculicides before student returns to school

PROCEDURE:

1. District nurse/health aide will screen students for head lice on an individual basis at the request of parents or staff members when students are suspected of having head lice.
 - Active head lice will be identified by live lice and viable nits, which are attached to the hair shaft within 1 cm of the scalp.
2. Parents will be notified when the child is suspected of having head lice and treatment options will be discussed. Supply parent or guardian with a head lice information sheet. Live lice will necessitate the child being picked up from school.
3. Student may be allowed to return to class but direct head to head contact should be discouraged.
4. Nit removal at the time of treatment by the parent or guardian should be considered for the following reasons:
 - Nit removal may decrease diagnostic confusion
 - Nit removal may decrease the possibility of unnecessary re-treatment
 - Some experts recommend removal of nits within 1 cm of the scalp to decrease the risk of self-re-infestation.
5. Student may be allowed to return to school after proper treatment. It may not be necessary for all nits to be removed before returning to class. However, an attempt at nit removal at the time of treatment is highly recommended.
6. Student will be re-screened in 7-10 days. Parent/guardian will be notified if viable nits are still present for manual removal. If live lice are seen, re-treatment is required for the child to attend school.
7. Classroom/Environmental Procedure:
 - a. Students with direct head to head contact with an infested student will be screened within one school day. This includes slumber parties, sleepovers, sharing combs, hats, barrettes, clothes, etc.
 - b. If two or more children in one class are identified as having active head lice, the entire classroom will be screened within one school day.
 - c. Classroom items, clothing, furniture, or carpeting that have been in contact with the head of the infested student should be cleaned as soon as possible.
 - d. Siblings in other school buildings should be checked by their building health aide. Notify the health aide as soon as possible.

References: American Academy of Pediatrics. (2002) Head Lice. *Pediatrics*, 110(3) 638-43.
NASN Statement: Pediculosis in the School Community