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## PEDICULOSIS

### PROCEDURES:

#### Principal Responsibilities:

1. To provide an annual regular procedure for informing parents about the prevention and treatment of pediculosis; Information Letter to Parents/Guardians (Appendix A) and "Facts About Head Lice" Timiskaming Health Unit (Appendix B) or "Head Lice" Porcupine Health Unit (Appendix C). Other information may also be utilized.
2. When a student is suspected / identified as having pediculosis:
  - a) Attempt to contact a parent/guardian and request that the student be treated as soon as possible. If feasible, the parent/guardian should pick up the child and commence treatment. If this is not feasible, the child will be removed from the classroom. Sensitivity to the feelings of the child will be given the highest priority.
  - b) Send home with the student the notice "A Message to Families" (Appendix D) and "Certification of Treatment" (Appendix D).
  - c) Send home with the other students in the class "A Letter of Attention" (Appendix E).
  - d) Readmit the student, after parent/guardian returns with the student and a signed Appendix D, certifying that treatment has been administered and that the student is free from pediculosis (lice, nits and eggs).
  - e) Check the student's head to ensure that the child is free of all live lice, live nits and eggs before readmission to class.
3. Where a parent/guardian has not taken effective treatment steps to remove the pediculosis
  - a) Refer the parent/guardian to their local Health Unit or local Family Health Team.
  - b) Excuse the student from attendance at school and if the parent/guardian refuses, then the principal may suspend the student for conduct injurious to the moral tone of the school. Only in unusual circumstances such as persistent refusal on the part of the parent/guardian should such an action be considered. Every effort should be made to reduce any possible absence from school due to the incidence of pediculosis.
  - c) Where a parent/guardian provides a letter of certification from a medical professional indicating the child is free of live lice, live nits and eggs, the child will be granted readmission.
4. Secondary school students will be excluded from school if head lice or nits are present. Readmission requirements shall be followed as listed above (2 (a), (b), (d) and (e)).

### **Parent / Guardian Responsibilities**

The primary responsibility of eradicating pediculosis belongs to the parent/guardian.

1. Parents/guardians shall be aware of the symptoms which indicate an infestation of pediculosis. Parent/guardian shall examine the child's head for a possible infestation particularly at the beginning of the school year, after breaks and during an outbreak. The parent/guardian shall encourage the child to brush/comb hair nightly as a preventative/early identification measure.
2. Parent/guardian shall notify the school when the child has head lice. If the parent/guardian becomes aware that the child has head lice, or the school identifies that the student has head lice, the school must notify the other parent/guardian with children in the same class.
3. The parent or guardian is expected to assume responsibility for safeguarding the health, safety, and well-being of their child. Parents are expected to ensure effective treatment methods are carried out. Parent/guardian is expected to ensure the prevention of the transmission of head lice within their home.
4. Parent/guardian shall return with the child once ready for readmission, with the signed Appendix D "Certification of Treatment". If the presence of live lice, live eggs or nits is detected, the parent/guardian is responsible to return home with the child to continue treatment.

### **Teacher/Staff Responsibilities:**

1. The teacher shall actively promote and institute preventative measures for the control of head lice in the classroom. A preventative measure may include not sharing headwear or other head attire.
2. The staff is aware of the symptoms indicating a head lice infestation.
3. The staff notifies the principal of a suspected infestation.
4. During an outbreak, additional preventative measures are advised such as: monitoring close physical groupings, suspending contact sports and certain classroom activities such as dress-up centres, keep their hats, coats, scarves, etc. at their desks, remove pillows and stuffed animals and store in a plastic bag.

Appendices:

**APPENDIX A**

Date:

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Information Letter Re: Pediculosis (Head Lice)

Each year cases of pediculosis (head lice) are found throughout our schools. These cases may occur multiple times throughout the year. In an effort to reduce the numbers of cases found and decrease the inconvenience to parents/guardians and students, District School Board Ontario North East requests your assistance. As your child is returning to school after school holidays, please inspect his/her hair and scalp for pediculosis. Periodic inspections during the year will help prevent the spread of head lice.

Head lice are tiny wingless insects with flattened bodies. They cling to the hair by means of six legs. They live mostly behind the ears and at the nape of the neck. The female lays tiny, yellowish-white eggs called nits. They resemble dandruff but are attached to the hair by the cement-like material and are very difficult to remove. It is usually the eggs that are noticed first.

If head lice are found, do not return your child to school until treated. The school must be notified as well. This will prevent the spread of pediculosis. Children are only allowed to re-enter the class when all the live lice, live eggs and nits are removed from the hair.

Sincerely,

Principal

APPENDIX B



**HEAD LICE**  
Treatment and Prevention

**What are head lice?**

Head lice are tiny wingless insects (about the size of a sesame seed) that are often grey to light brown. Lice lay eggs called nits, which are about the size of a grain of sand. They stick to the hair shaft (within ¼ inch of the scalp) and take about one week to hatch into adult lice. Head lice do not spread disease. Having head lice does not mean you are not clean. Head lice can occur at any time of year and can occur multiple times throughout a year. Head lice have been common for thousands of years.



**How do they spread?**

Head lice spread easily, among children who are in close contact.

- Head lice spread through direct hair-to-hair contact or indirectly by sharing things like hats, combs, hairbrushes and headphones.
- Head lice don't fly or hop, but do crawl very quickly.
- Head lice that live on people can't live on pets, such as cats or dogs.
- After the eggs have hatched, white empty shells are shed. The shells do not spread lice.

**If you suspect lice?**

One of the first signs of head lice is an itchy scalp. But it is possible to have head lice without any symptoms. You need to search for live lice.

Children can have a few nits without actually having a case of head lice.

- Good lighting is important when you are checking. Head lice move fast and are hard to see.
- Check carefully by parting the hair in small sections, moving from one side of the head to the other.
- They are usually found very close to the scalp, at the bottom of the neck and around the ears.

**Treatment**

Over-the-counter shampoo/cream's kill lice so that they cannot continue to lay eggs. Ask your pharmacist to decide which product to use. Follow the instructions on the label. A second treatment should be done after 7 to 10 days. Natural remedies have not been proven to be effective.

Check all family members if someone in the house has head lice. Treat everyone who has head lice on the same day to prevent passing back and forth.

Sometimes, these treatments can make the scalp itchy or can leave a mild burning feeling. If your child is scratching after treatment, it does not necessarily mean the lice are back.

Do not treat anyone with a head lice product unless you find lice in their hair.

### **Don't forget**

- Wash clothing, bedding, and towels that were recently worn in hot water, then dry on high heat.
- Place items that cannot be washed (stuffed animals, pillows, etc.) in a tightly sealed plastic bag for 2 weeks.
- Because head lice can't survive long off the scalp (24 to 48 hours), there is no need for excessive cleaning.

### **Preventing the spread of head lice**

Teach children:

- To avoid head-to-head contact with other children.
- Not to share hats, helmets, combs, hair brushes or hair ornaments, headphones or scarves with others.

Notify your child's teacher or childcare operator if your child has head lice. Tell people at any place your child has visited so they can check for lice.

### **For more information**

[http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/head\\_lice](http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/head_lice)

[www.cps.ca/documents/position/head-lice](http://www.cps.ca/documents/position/head-lice)

### **Timiskaming Health Unit offices:**

**New Liskeard**  
705-647-4305  
1-866-747-4305

**Englehart**  
705-544-2221  
1-877-544-2221

**Kirkland Lake**  
705-567-9355  
1-866-967-935



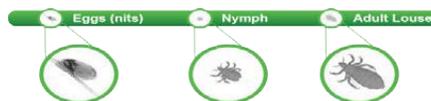
# Head Lice

## Head Lice: Treatment and Prevention

healthful

### What are head lice?

Head lice are tiny wingless insects (about the size of a sesame seed) that vary in color, but are often grey to light brown. Lice lay eggs that are called nits. Nits stick to the hair shaft (within a ¼ inch of the scalp) and take about 1 week to hatch into adult lice.



### How do people get head lice?

Head lice are spread through direct contact among people (heads touching) or indirectly (sharing hats, combs, clothes, scarves, barrettes, helmets, etc.). Lice cannot jump or fly, but they crawl really quickly.

### Common sites where head lice are found:

Lice are commonly found around ears, forehead, and nape of neck. Having head lice does not mean that you are unclean; head lice do not have a preference for clean or dirty hair.

- They feed off the blood from your scalp and the warmth of your head.
- Head lice do not cause disease.
- Head lice do not live on pets (cats and dogs).



### If You Suspect Head Lice:

- Search your child's head for head lice in a brightly lit space (lice move fast and are hard to see).
- Part the hair in small sections from side to side beginning at base of the hair around the ears and across the back of the neck until whole head has been examined.
- Recheck hair after 1 and 2 weeks.



### What Are The Symptoms of Head Lice?

A person may be infested with head lice and not experience symptoms. The most common signs of head lice are:

- Tickling and the sensation of movement
- Itching
- Sores on the scalp because of scratching (these can become infected)

### Questions?

705-267-1181  
1 800-461-1818

## Treatment

Treatment involves the use of an over-the-counter pesticide to kill lice so that they cannot continue to lay eggs. Talk with your pharmacist to decide which shampoo to use. Always follow the instructions on the label. Treatment should be repeated in 7-10 days. Remove nits by using a nit comb or by pinching them between your fingers and sliding them off the hair shaft.

- Do not use the same medication more than 2-3 times if unsuccessful.
- Home remedies should be avoided.

Figure 1: Applying treatment



Figure 2: Removing nits



## Prevention Methods

- Check your child's hair for lice regularly.
- Teach children:
  - To avoid head-to-head contact with other children
  - Not to share hats, helmets, combs, headphones, or scarves with others
  - Not to lie on beds, couches, pillows, carpets, or stuffed animals that have recently been in contact with an infected person
- Notify your child's teacher if your child has head lice. Teachers have an important role in the prevention of head lice by teaching students and parents about preventative measures. They can also notify parents when there is a head lice outbreak.

## Don't Forget...

- Wash clothing, bedding, and towels that were recently worn using your machine's hottest setting. Laundry should be dried on high heat for at least 20 minutes.
- Place items that cannot be washed (stuffed animals, pillows, etc.) in a tightly sealed plastic bag for two weeks.
- Vacuum rugs, carpets, upholstered furniture, mattresses, vehicle interiors and car seats.
- Soak all family combs and brushes for at least 10 minutes in hot water.
- Do not use pesticide sprays, they are not safe for people or pets.

APPENDIX D

Date:

Dear Parent / Guardian:

Your child appears to have pediculosis (head lice). Anyone can get head lice. They are a nuisance, but do not cause illness.

Please refer to attached fact sheet which contains information for treating your child and your household. It is important to apply the recommended treatment once and repeat once, one week later.

**Your child must be free of live lice, live nits and eggs before returning to school.**

Following treatment, you are expected to accompany your child back to school with the completed "Certification of Treatment" (see below).

At this time, the school will conduct a screening to confirm that the live lice, live eggs and nits have all been removed, before readmission to class. Staff will use their best judgement in determining if the head lice have been removed based on the established procedures in the Pediculosis Policy (2.1.24). Regretfully, if live lice, live nits or eggs are still evident, the child will be required to return home for further treatment.

Parents/guardians may wish to consult a medical professional.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal

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**CERTIFICATION OF TREATMENT (Head Lice/Nits/Eggs)**

Dear Principal:

Please be advised that \_\_\_\_\_ has been treated for the condition of lice/nits/eggs.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Shampoo Applied: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX E**

**Letter of Attention**

Date:

Dear Parent/Guardian

A case of head lice (pediculosis) has been found in your child's class. Head lice are spread by direct head-to-head contact. Please check your child's hair for lice (pediculosis), eggs and nits.

Head lice are not a reflection on the state of one's cleanliness. Anyone can get head lice. Please refer to the attached information fact sheet for the steps to take if your child has head lice. Please contact the school if head lice, eggs, or nits are detected.

If you have any questions that have not been answered in the attached information sheet, please call the local health unit or family health team.

Sincerely,

Principal

**Appendices A-E**

**Appendix A: Information Letter**

**Appendix B: Facts about Head Lice - Timiskaming Health Unit**

**Appendix C: Head Lice Information - Porcupine Health Unit**

**Appendix D: Certification of Treatment Letter**

**Appendix E: Letter of Attention**