

Hopewell Area School District Policy **LICE (HEAD) - PEDICULOSIS CAPITIS**

Description

Head lice are tiny insects that live and feed on the skin of the scalp among human hair. They glue eggs (nits) to the base of the hair shaft. The nits hatch in 5-10 days.

In order for lice to survive, they need temperature and humidity similar to the human body. Adult lice will die within 24-36 hours without a human host. Heat (a hair dryer) will make lice fall out of the hair or cold (placing an article of clothing in the freezer) will kill lice.

Lice are not known to transmit a disease. The medical problem they present is itching of the scalp which can cause intense scratching. This can result in impetigo, boils, or other infections which can cause enlarged lymph nodes.

Inspection-Screening

Students with Infestation: any student who has active head lice or nits must be excluded from school.

Inspection of Classmates: will be performed by the school nurse.

Technique for Inspection

An average infestation is from 5-10 lice which move quickly from view. Therefore the diagnosis is often made by the presence of nits. These can be confused with dandruff but are easily identifiable with a magnifying glass. Since nits reattach firmly try moving one. If it sticks, it is a nit. If it is more than 3/4 to one inch from the scalp, the nit has likely already hatched and may flake off easily. Lice are most often found at the back of the neck and around the ear attached to the hair root.

Have child lean head forward and lift hair at the back of the neck. Section the hair and inspect the scalp for signs of bites or infection from scratching.

Confirmed Cases

The child must be picked up before the end of the day.

1. Notify parent.
2. Discuss procedure with parent.
3. A notification letter will be sent home, containing school policy and printed instructions about home management.
4. The school nurse must check students before readmission. Parent is to schedule a time for reexamination prior to admittance.
5. Child is not to be sent to school on the bus.
6. Student may be readmitted the day after treatment if no nits are present.

7. If sibling attends a different school, the school nurse of the other school will be notified.
8. If a parent calls to notify the school nurse of infestation of their child or another student, the classroom and sibling of the suspected student will be checked.

At Home treatment:

Pediculicidal shampoos kill lice but rarely kill nits. RID, Nix, A200, R&C Shampoos are available at drugstores. Kwell is no longer recommended for lice. It is sold only by prescription.

1. One or two additional treatments may be needed for severe infestation at 7-10 day intervals for a period of three weeks.
2. Students should be instructed not to share combs or brushes.
3. Combs and brushes should be washed in hot (130 degree) water.
4. Clothing and bedding should be washed in soap and hot water and dried at high heat.
5. Spraying insecticide on items in the house or clothing is ineffective. Spraying a person may be harmful.

Complications From Scratching

1. Impetigo or infection of the scalp.
2. Enlarged, painful posterior, cervical or occipital lymph nodes.
3. May be treated with antibiotics prior to application of pediculicide.

Follow Up

1. Instruct teachers to notify the school nurse of students who scratch their head excessively.
2. Examine scalp and hair when the students return to school after treatment and again 7-10 days later.
3. Educate the parent and student to prevent re-infestation.
4. Educate parents and custodian that an application of insecticide sprays in the classrooms, bathrooms, or busses is not recommended.