

WARREN SCHOOLS

HEAD LICE (PEDICULOSIS)

Dear Parents/Guardians:

A case of Head Lice has been discovered in your child's Grade level.

I thought I would gather some more information regarding our "pesty enemy", the head louse.

If your child's head is itchy, please check it, just to be sure.

Some general information about head lice is listed below:

1. Head lice can affect anyone. It does not discriminate, everyone is at risk. A Louse is about 1/16 of an inch long.
2. Head lice are wingless insects about the size of a sesame seed. They may be reddish brown, gray or white in color. They live on the scalp and feed by sucking blood. They don't hop, jump or fly.
3. After the female louse mates, she lays four or five eggs (Nits) which are glued strongly to the hair shaft. After seven to ten days the nits hatch. A single louse can lay as many as 150 eggs during its typical 30 day life span.
4. When separated from the host (humans), head lice die within 48 to 55 hours at room temperature. **Nits can last up to two to three weeks which is why it essential to remove them all.**
5. Lice and their nits are most commonly found behind a child's ears, the base of the neck, crown of the head or the bang area.
6. The nits are small, oval, whitish, semi-translucent nodules glued at an angle to the side of the hair shaft. Nits can be distinguished from dandruff because they are very sticky and difficult to remove. Dandruff will easily flake off.
7. Adult head lice do not like bright light and will move rapidly from one area of the head to another to avoid it. It is important to check frequently once detected. Nits do not move, easily found.
8. Most common symptom of lice infestation is **itching**.

Treatments: Here are some of the common products, please call your Health Care Provider for advice:

RID – You must use this when the hair is DRY. Then follow the directions carefully. RID has a web site www.licerid.com or call 1-800-RID-LICE.

NIX - This should be used after hair has been washed with your regular shampoo, rinsed with water and towel dried. Then apply and follow the directions carefully.

NIX has a toll-free number 1-888-lice-line

CLEAR – ask your pharmacist or call 1-800-783-1919. Web site www.clearcare.com

Another website to visit is the National Pediculosis Association, www.Headlice.org

LICEMEISTER COMB which has been endorsed by the National Pediculosis Assoc.

There are other combs on the market. There is the Robi Comb. It runs on a battery and detects live lice and kills them.

Getting rid of head lice and nits need not be difficult. It is a matter of washing the hair with a lice-killing product, then very carefully removing all the nits. Removal of the nits is important to avoid the continuation of the life cycle. All family members should be examined for head lice prior to sending on the school bus. If you are unsure, please call the nurse, drive your child to school and ask the school to check your child prior to entering the class. **Only those showing evidence of infestation should be treated. Reminder: Please check your child's head if they are scratching it.** Clusters of nits are commonly found behind the ears and the nape of the neck. **Your child may return to school after receiving treatment AND when ALL nits have been removed.** A Parent is asked to be present for the re-inspection by the school nurse Prior to admission to the classroom. If any louse or nits are found you will be asked to bring your child home

Treatment requires killing of all lice and **removal of all nits**. **Hair Combing should take 2-5 hours.**

Tips:

1. Work under a good light.
2. Divide hair into tiny sections.
3. Examine the entire head carefully.
4. Use a nit removal comb; go from the scalp to the end of hair.
5. It may take two or three passes of the comb on each tiny section to removal all nits.
6. If the lice comb does not remove nits, use fingernails or a scissor to snip hair strand to remove the nits from the hair. Snipping individual strands of hair is the easiest way to remove nits from long hair. When the entire head has been combed, recomb the entire head once more.
7. It is recommended that two people work together looking on each side of the head since lice move very quickly, especially under a bright light.
8. Check every day for the next two to three weeks. Be diligent about the manual removal. This is one of the keys to successfully removing the nits.
9. Another way to help rid this condition is to use Olive Oil or Cetaphil on the head, blowing with a hair dryer and letting it sit for 8 hours/overnight with a shower cap on. This is supposed to smother the lice and loosens the cemented Nits on the hair shaft. The added benefit of this step is that it helps condition both the scalp and hair.

Wash clothes and bed linens in very hot water and use a clothes dryer for 30-60 minutes. Combs, brushes and hair accessories may be soaked in very hot water for 10 minutes or sealed in a plastic bag for 3 weeks. Nonwashables should be dry cleaned or put in a plastic bag for 3 weeks. Floors, furniture and rugs should be vacuumed daily for 2 weeks. Car upholstery should also be vacuumed. Put pillows in the dryer for 30 minutes on hot cycle.

As a preventive measure, discourage children from sharing hats, combs, hair accessories or other personal items with anyone else. In the mall or stores discourage your children from trying on hats, using earphones in the record stores or trying on any articles which may have come in contact with another person's head. In movie theaters place your jacket over the back of the seat, especially for younger children whose heads come into contact with the seat. Launder the coat when you return home. The same is recommended when traveling by train or airplane.

Reminder: Please check your child's head if they are scratching it. All family members should be examined for head lice prior to sending on the school bus. If you are unsure, please call the nurse, drive your child to school and ask the school to check your child prior to entering the class. **Only those showing evidence of infestation should be treated. Your child may return to school after receiving treatment AND when ALL nits have been removed.** A Parent is asked to be present for the re-inspection by the school nurse, **Prior** to admission to the classroom. If any louse or nits are found you will be asked to bring your child home.

Thank you for your continued help If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call.

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Revised 1/4/08

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HEAD LICE TREATMENT CHECK LIST

1. _____ Examine all household members for nits or lice.
2. _____ Treat hair with a product that kills lice according to package instructions. Do not use outdated products. Use enough of the product to saturate the hair. Consult your physician before using any product on a child under 1 year of age.
3. _____ Comb and pick all nits out of hair under a bright light or in good sunlight. Use a lice comb and a magnifying glass or reading glasses if needed.
4. _____ Wash all recently used clothes, bed linens, throw pillows, and towels in hot water and dry on hot cycle.
5. _____ Wash all hair ties, bands, and scrunches in hot water and dry on hot cycle.
6. _____ Vacuum all fabric toys, stuffed animals, headphones and helmets thoroughly.
7. _____ Soak all combs and brushes in very hot water for 20 minutes.
8. _____ Vacuum all carpeting, upholstered furniture, mattresses and car seats thoroughly and throw vacuum bag away.
9. _____ Examine all household members daily for 2 weeks for lice or nits. Retreat in 7 days if package states to do so. Do not use these products more frequently or add to other hair care products. Used too frequently, these products may cause future health problems and become less effective on lice.
10. _____ Inform other households where children stay about head lice so that they may be examined and treated if necessary.
11. _____ Inform your child's school and childcare provider that they have had head lice and have been treated.
12. _____ Have children store their coats, hats, and other personal items in their backpacks or plastic bags with handles that will hang on hooks in the room or locker.