



Fountain • Fort Carson
SCHOOL DISTRICT EIGHT

LICE (HEAD)-PEDICULOSIS CAPITIS*

BASIC INFORMATION

Head lice are tiny, wingless insects that live in human hair. The adult louse is 2 to 3 mm long (the size of a sesame seed) and usually pale gray, although color may vary. Nits are lice eggs that are laid by live lice. Head lice are not an emergency!! They pose no health risk.

PHYSICAL FINDING

The gold standard for diagnosing head lice is finding a live louse on the head. Lice found on combs are likely to be injured or dead, and a healthy louse is not likely to leave a healthy head. The presence of nits does not indicate an infestation.

MANAGEMENT

1. Permethrin 1% (Nix) is currently the recommended treatment for head lice, with retreatment in 7 to 10 days if live lice are seen. Instructions on proper use of products should be carefully relayed. Safety and efficacy should be taken into account when recommending any product for treatment of head lice infestation.
2. None of the currently available pediculicides are 100% ovicidal and resistance has been reported with lindane, pyrethrins, and permethrin. Treatment failure does not equate with resistance, and most instances of such failure represent misdiagnosis /misidentification or noncompliance with the treatment regimen.
3. The best treatment for head lice is manual removal with a comb designed for removal of lice and nits.
4. A child should be allowed to return to school after proper treatment.
5. Medical professionals do not promote “No Nit” policies because they believe that children should be returned to school as soon as they have had proper treatment.

EDUCATION:

The school can be most helpful by making available accurate information on diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of head lice to the entire school community in an understandable form.

See attached Head Lice Sheet

*Information obtained from the American Academy of Pediatrics Clinical Report 10/02.

MANAGEMENT SCHEME FOR SCHOOL *

IF A REPORT OR CONCERN ABOUT LICE OR NITS ARISES:

1. The school nurse or trained personnel will inspect the child's head for nits
 - a. No nits discovered the process ends
 - b. Nits are discovered- check the child's head for live lice
 - c. No live crawling lice are discovered the child's head should be inspected within 7 day for evidence of live crawling lice
 - d. Instruct parent/guardian to comb hair with a nit comb or hand pick out nits
2. Live **crawling** lice
 - a. Live crawling lice are discovered:
 1. Notify parent/guardian of the suspected infestation
 2. Provide information on the biology of head lice and methods to eliminate infestations. Student may return to school after being properly treated.
 3. School nurse will recheck hair in a week

If the school receives several reports of students with lice from the same classroom or from multiple classrooms, schools may opt to send information to parent letting them know about the situation and giving them general information about lice, what to look for and how to treat if they discover lice on their child. This would be at the principal's discretion. Schools can focus their efforts on providing information on lice treatment and prevention of further problems.

Websites with information on head lice:

<https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/index.html>

<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/head-lice.html>



HEAD LICE

Our old friend head lice have once again made their appearance at school. While just the mention of this subject starts us all scratching our heads I think we need to keep the facts of head lice in perspective. They may be revolting, but head lice don't transmit disease. They cause some itching, but they're generally harmless. But head lice myths aren't harmless. I have included a few facts and myths surrounding head lice that hopefully will help you understand my perspective on checking students.

FACTS:

Head Lice cannot jump or fly.

Head Lice never leave the head unless they are forced to do so. Head lice detached from the scalp soon die.

Head Lice are parasites. They lay 5 to 6 eggs every day at the base of the scalp hair shafts.

Head Lice are most often found behind the ears and at the back of the neck.

Head lice feed on blood every three to six hours.

A person has an infestation of head lice only if adult lice are present

Nits are head lice eggs. Most of the nits you see aren't living things. The eggshells left over from hatched head lice can be easily seen as white casings and can be confused with dandruff. Unhatched viable nits are "glued" to the hair by the adult louse and are camouflaged to match a person's hair color. Having nits in the hair does not necessarily mean a person has head lice. Only live lice can cause an infestation. (This is why we do not have a no nits policy.)

MYTHS:

FICTION: Nits in the hair mean a person has lice.

FACT: Fewer than one in five children with nits go on to get lice infestations.

FICTION: Treat children if they have nits.

FACT: Treatment should begin only when adult lice are found.

FICTION: If your child gets head lice, you have to clean all sheets, clothing, earphones, and furniture with insecticide.

FACT: There's no evidence this helps. Head lice soon die after leaving a person's head.

FICTION: Lice spread easily by sharing hats, pillows, or chairs

FACT: Lice on hats and furniture are sick, dead, elderly or are just cast-off lice skins. They can't cause an infection. Lice are spread from person to person only by prolonged head-to-head contact. But it's still a good idea for children to avoid sharing combs, brushes, and hats.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact the school nurse.