



Dear Parent:

During a screening examination, your child was found to have head lice. Head lice do not carry any disease, and their presence does not indicate unsanitary conditions. Head lice can infest anyone. To prevent further spread of head lice to other students, this condition should be treated immediately. Your child may not be allowed to return to class until the infestation has been properly treated. You may wish to consult your family physician, a local pharmacist, the school nurse, or follow the recommendations below. In addition, you should inspect the entire family for head lice as your child may have spread it to other members. Head lice feed only on humans, and are usually transmitted by head to head contact.

Upon return to school your child will be inspected by the school nurse to determine that the head lice infestation no longer exists. This means that your child must be free of all lice and viable nits (eggs).

Basic Head Louse Control Recommendations

1. Live lice must be removed or killed.

Mechanically removing head lice can be accomplished using a special, fine-toothed comb which requires no use of pesticides. This method is time consuming but can be made easier after the application of ordinary hair conditioner. Various creams and shampoos which contain pesticides are available over the counter for treatment of head lice. These treatments are not always effective and may cause reactions in some children. There are two or three products available by prescription only, which are known to be quite effective at killing head lice. The prescription products also contain pesticides. Recently several over-the-counter brands of head lice shampoos have become available which claim to be non-toxic and effective at killing lice. No known scientific reports exist as to their efficacy.
2. Eggs (nits) of head lice must be removed from the child's hair.

This step is the most crucial and will require most of your time and effort. There are no known products available over-the-counter which kill head lice eggs. Eggs must be removed using a fine-toothed comb or tweezers.
3. Your child's bedding, clothes, and towels must be washed in warm soapy water and dried in a dryer on the "high heat" cycle.

This step must be completed on the same day as above steps. Any personal items such as toys or stuffed animals which cannot be laundered must be sealed in a plastic bag for two weeks. Although head lice live only on humans, this step will kill any lice or eggs which may have recently fallen off your child's head. Vacuuming carpets and furniture may also help.

For more complete information please feel free to contact the school nurse. You may also obtain information from the National School Integrated Pest Management Web Site at <http://schoolipm.ifas.ufl.edu/> or the National Pediculosis Association at <http://www.headlice.org>.

Sincerely,

School Principal