

South Newton School Corporation
Health Services
Paula J. McCarthy, BSN, Med -- Director of Health Services

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Your child has been sent home today because he/she was found to have head lice. **There is no need for alarm.** Head lice are a common problem among school children and can happen to anyone. They are not a sign of poor health habits or poor hygiene. I am giving you this information so that you can assist in controlling the condition by following the procedure to treat the head lice. Your help is key to eliminating lice from our school as soon as possible!

Lice are highly contagious. Signs and symptoms of a lice infestation may include itching and irritations of the scalp. The main symptom is an "itchy" scalp. They can also cause decreased attention span in school as well as irritability. If you look closely at the scalp (a flashlight and magnifying glass may help), you will see small grayish-white eggs attached to the hair shaft, especially at the nape of the neck and behind the ears. These eggs (nits) are small, about the size of a pinhead, and resemble dandruff. Nits are attached to the hair shaft with a cement-like substance and are difficult to remove. Dandruff, on the other hand, is easily brushed from the hair.

Head lice are usually transmitted through:

1. Close personal contact with a person who is infested with the lice or through the use of shared combs, hair brushes, and other grooming aids.
2. Sharing caps, hats, scarves, or coats or touching of these items with similar items at school, a friend's house or other places.

An informational sheet describing the necessary treatment for head lice is attached. All these measures are necessary to prevent others in your family from getting lice.

Also attached are two treatment verification forms. **These must be completed and signed before your student may return to school.** You may wish to consult with your primary care physician, or the Newton County Health Department concerning treatment for head lice.

Thank you again for your cooperation in this important Health concern. Please do your part to prevent further spread by ***examining and combing your child hair daily for the next two weeks and on a regular basis*** thereafter. If you have any questions, please call me.

Sincerely,

Paula J. McCarthy, RN
School Nurse

TREATMENT OF HEAD LICE

The following is a suggested procedure you may wish to use in treating head lice with your child and decontaminating personal items as well as the home environment. More information can be obtained by your physician, and the Newton County Health Department.

TREATMENT OF THE STUDENT

1. Remove your child's clothing and place him/her in a bathtub or shower stall. Place their clothing in a plastic bag and seal the bag until the clothes can be washed.
2. Apply head louse treatment according to your physician's instructions or the label instructions on the medicated shampoo bottle. There are medicated liquids available for head lice. Kwell* is available only by prescription. RID, NIX, and others may be purchased without a prescription. There is no published evidence that indicates that one product is superior to another.
3. Remove nits with a very fine toothed comb.
4. Have your child put on clean clothing after the treatment.
5. **Repeat the treatment in 7 to 10 days.** While the products mentioned above rapidly kill crawling lice, they may not kill all the nits (lice eggs). Repeating the treatment in 7 to 10 days kill the newly hatched lice. (The 7 to 10 day interval is the same as the incubation period for the louse's egg).
6. All family member and close friends of your child should be examined. Family members who have evidence of infestations (crawling forms or nits) should be treated. Siblings or parents who share a bed with a known infested child should be treated whether or not there is evidence of infestation at the time of the examination.

DECONTAMINATION OF PERSONAL ITEMS AND ENVIRONMENT

Heat is lethal to lice and their eggs. Many personal items can be disinfected by machine washing in HOT water and/or drying using the hot cycle of the dryer. Lice eggs are killed in 5 minutes at 125 degrees Fahrenheit. To maintain the water at 140 degrees, or higher, allow time between loads of laundry or other demands on your hot water heater. If total reliance is placed in the clothes dryer for disinfestations, dry articles for at least 20 minutes on the **highest heat setting possible for your dryer.** Some non-washable articles may be disinfested in the dryer, provided the heat will not harm the item.

1. Machine wash all washable clothing and bed linens that have been in contact with your child within the previous 3 days.
2. Personal articles of clothing or bedding that cannot be washed or dried may be dry cleaned or simply left in a plastic bag that is sealed for two weeks.
3. Combs, brushes, and similar items, can be disinfected by soaking the item in one of the head lice liquid solutions for 1 hour or by soaking the item in hot water (above 130 degrees) for 10 minutes.

NOTIFICATION OF OTHER PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Parents/Guardians of your child's closest friends should be notified that their child may have been exposed to lice and may be infested since they play together. This is particularly important if the children have slept together or participated in activities that involve frequent body contact, such as wrestling, football, ballet classes, pajama parties, etc.

RETURNING TO SCHOOL

Your child may return to school the morning **after** he/she has been treated with head louse shampoo. Parents/Guardians **MUST** complete the **TREATMENT FORM with the box top attached**, prior to your child being allowed to re-enter school. Parents need to bring the form and their child to school the day of re-entry. Students will be examined for live head lice prior to being allowed to return to school. **Students with live head lice will NOT be allowed to return to school and will be sent home.**

Attn: School Nurse

ES – MS - HS

TREATMENT #1 -- HEAD LICE (PEDICULOSIS) TREATMENT FORM

Student: _____

This is to notify the school that the above student has been given a medicated shampoo treatment On the following date:_____.

****ATTACH BOX COVER TO FORM****

I have begun to remove nits and to do the necessary treatment of the home environment. I understand that the medicated shampoo treatment must be repeated in 7 - 10 days and that the nits must be removed by the time the second treatment is completed. I will comb for nits daily for two weeks.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

(Parent must accompany their child on the day they return to school)

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TREATMENT #2

(Attach box cover of shampoo to form)

Student: _____

This is to notify the school that the above student has been given the Second medicated shampoo treatment On the following date: _____

****ATTACH BOX COVER TO FORM****

All nits have been removed. I have completed the necessary treatment of the home environment.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____