



PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION PACKAGE

PEDICULOSIS (HEAD LICE)

2014

PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION
PEDICULOSIS:

Pediculosis:

Infection with head lice is called pediculosis.

Head lice:

- have nothing to do with lack of cleanliness – anyone can get lice.
- are a nuisance, but they do not cause illness.
- is not a public health problem because lice do not transmit disease.
- common among school children and is easily treated.

Please read the attached information sheet 'When Your Child Comes Home with Pediculosis (Head Lice)'. Please consult with a pharmacist or your family doctor, to determine the appropriate treatment. Individuals with particular allergies should consult their family doctor.

What are Head Lice: (lice is the plural of louse)

Parasites that can be found on the heads of people.

Adult: Head Lice are tiny, wingless, grayish brown parasitic insect, about the size of a sesame seed, has six legs, which live and breed in human hair. To live, adult lice feeds on extremely small amounts of blood drawn from the scalp. Adult lice can live up to 30 days on a person's head. If the louse falls off a person, it dies within two days. Lice aren't dangerous and they don't spread disease, but they are contagious. Their bites may cause a child's scalp to become itchy and inflamed, and persistent scratching may lead to skin irritation and even infection.

Nits (Lice eggs) These look like tiny yellow, tan, or brown dots oval in shape and half the size of a pinhead. Lice lay nits on hair shafts close to the scalp where the temperature is perfect for keeping warm until they hatch in about 7-10 days. The tiny eggs are glued firmly to the hair and the Nits look sort of like dandruff, only they can't be removed by brushing or shaking them off

Nymph: The nit hatches into a baby louse called a nymph. It looks like an adult head louse but is smaller. Nymphs mature into adults about seven days after hatching. To live, the nymph must feed on blood.

How does a child get head lice?

A child can contract head lice in a number of ways.

- Contact with an already infested person: Personal contact is common during play, school, or sports activities, and at school, home, slumber parties, or camp
- Wearing infested clothing, such as hats, scarves, coats, sports uniforms, or hair ribbons
- Using infested combs, brushes, or towels
- Lying on a bed, couch, pillow, carpet, or stuffed animal that has recently been in contact with a person with lice.

HCDSB 'NO NIT POLICY' FOR HEAD LICE:

- Students identified with lice (adult, nymphs or nits) are excluded from attending school.
- Clearance for return to school will only be given if all nits have been removed. This clearance must be provided by a board recognized screening agency or medical practitioner. If parents/guardians use a medical practitioner parents are responsible for any costs involved.

SCHOOL PROCEDURES WHEN YOUR CHILD IS IDENTIFIED, BY THE SCREENING AGENCY, AS BEING INFESTED WITH HEAD LICE.

- **School Administrator will:**
 - NOTIFY the parents/guardians of child(ren) identified with head lice infestation. Sends home for all positive cases with the child(ren):
 - a) Letter (Child Identified with Head Lice - Appendix A) signed by the Principal.
 - b) Information sheet: 'When Your Child Comes Home with Pediculosis (Head Lice)'
 - EXCLUDES the child with the identified infestation from school.
 - NOTIFIES other parents/guardians with a child in the class of a student identified with a case of head lice. Sends home with each student:
 - a) Letter (Notification of Head Lice in Your Child's Classroom– Appendix B)
 - b) Information sheet: 'When Your Child Comes Home with Pediculosis (Head Lice)'
 - PERMITS re entry of the child to school following treatment and receipt of written confirmation by a screening agency approved by the HCDSB or medical practitioner that lice and nits are gone. A written statement must be provided to the home school which states that the child may return to school. If parents/guardians use a medical practitioner parents are responsible for any costs involved

ROLE OF PARENT/GUARDIAN:

- CHECK** child(ren)'s heads once a week for head lice. Do not wait for itchiness as a sign of head lice. Children can have head lice for many weeks before they feel itchy.
Look for live lice in the hair or for nits (eggs) glued to the shaft of the hair, oval in shape and grey to brown in colour.
Please refer to the attached information sheet entitled "When Your Child Comes Home with Pediculosis (Head Lice)".

- ACTIVELY** promote and institutes preventative measures for the control of head lice in the home environment e.g.
 - Teach children to brush and comb their hair vigorously every night. This will injure the head lice and prevent them from breeding
 - Braiding long hair and putting it into a ponytail may be helpful
 - Parents can check their child's head once a week, especially around the ears and the neck area
 - Be especially watchful after group activities, such as sleepovers and camps, where head-to-head contact could have occurred

- NOTIFY** the school and other possible community contacts, as soon as possible, if an infestation is discovered

- ENSURE** that treatment methods are carried out. Check with your local pharmacist for products to use with your child.

- TAKE** the child to the screening agency or medical practitioner for a recheck.
Note: Parents who prefer to have their child checked, after treatment, by a medical practitioner rather than the screening agency may do so at their own expense.

- PROVIDE** to the principal the rescreening form from the agency or medical practitioner indicating that the child may return to school.

Please read the attached information sheet 'When Your Child Comes Home with Pediculosis (Head Lice)' to assist you. Please consult with a pharmacist or your family doctor, to determine the appropriate treatment. Individuals with particular allergies should consult their family doctor.

If you have any questions that have not been answered by the attached sheet, please call the school or consult the Halton Regional Public Health website at:

www.halton.ca/cms/One.aspx?portalId=8310&pageId=70872#g + Search – Head Lice.

HALTON CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
WHEN YOUR CHILD COMES HOME WITH PEDICULOSIS (HEAD LICE)

JANUARY 2011

HOW TO PREVENT SPREAD OF HEAD LICE:

- Check your child's hair carefully once a week for lice and eggs. They are hard to see.
- Teach your child to brush/comb their hair every night.
- Braid long hair or put into ponytail (may be helpful).

WHAT ARE HEAD LICE?

Head lice are tiny, wingless, grayish brown insects which live and breed in human hair. They move quickly when you part the hair and are hard to see.

The eggs are half the size of a pinhead, (.08 mm), oval in shape and grey to brown in colour. The tiny eggs are glued firmly to the hair. Newly laid eggs are very close to the scalp. The warmth at the scalp will hatch them in about 7 – 10 days.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO:

- Talk to a pharmacist. Ask for a product which kills head lice and their eggs. Ask if there are any special precautions to take while using the product. Some products may not be recommended for young children, people with certain allergies or pregnant and nursing mothers.
- If unsure, please check with your doctor.
- Also ask your doctor regarding treatment for the following persons:
 1. for treatment of children under the age of two;
 2. for persons with a seizure disorder;
 3. if lice are discovered on eyebrows, eyelashes or beard;
 4. if the skin of the scalp is broken or infected;
 5. for pregnant or breast feeding mothers.
- Only treat family members who have head lice.
- Follow the product directions exactly. Never use these products on a daily basis,
- Wear plastic or rubber gloves when using the product so you won't expose your hands to the chemical for too long. Wash your hands well, immediately after using the head lice product.
- Hold a towel tightly over the eyes to protect them from the product during treatment.
- Rinse hair under the tap instead of in the shower or tub, to limit skin exposure and prevent swallowing some of the product.
- Store any unused products out of the reach of children.

IMPORTANT:

- Remove all live lice from the hair using fingers, nit comb or brush. For long hair brush hair from the scalp downward and then with head bent forward, brush hair from the nape of the neck upward to the scalp.
- Sit by bright natural light to see the eggs.
- Take hold of a lock of hair and manually pull eggs from the hair because nit combs will not reach the new eggs that are laid close to the scalp.
- Using your thumbnail against your first finger strip the eggs from the root of the hair down to the tips. (Place eggs in a paper towel for the garbage.)
- Pin back that lock of hair and continue until all the eggs are removed.
- Especially make sure you remove the eggs that are close to the scalp.
- Ask the pharmacist when the second treatment should be done.
- Routine household cleaning is sufficient. Spraying of household items is not necessary and can be harmful.

THEN WHAT:

- Remember to tell the school or child care centre about the head lice.
- Remember to tell anyone who has had close contact with the person in your family who has head lice.
- Ask your school or child care centre about the procedure for re-entry to the school or centre.
- Continue to check your child's head once a week, after school breaks, sleepovers and vacations. Head lice can spread anytime heads are close together. Your child can get head lice again!

For more information:

www.halton.ca/cms/One.aspx?portalId=8310&pageId=70872#g

Search – Head Lice.