

REGULATIONS

JHCC-R

Controlling Head Lice At The Schools

PROCEDURE

The head louse (Pediculus) is a bloodsucking insect parasite that is found on the heads of people. It is generally considered to inhabit only the hairy surface of the scalp and the hair, preferring the nape of the neck and the area behind the ears. (The length of the hair does not appear to have an effect). It is not known to occur on eyebrows or eyelashes.

Most outbreaks occur in elementary, middle and high schools. This is because schools bring large numbers of children into close contact daily. Control depends on prompt case findings, proper administrative handling of each case, effective treatment, and prevention of spread.

The following steps will be followed at the schools:

A. Discovery

1. The school principal will give their classroom teachers brief instructions on techniques for identifying head lice and ask them to act as sentries to report suspected infestation.
2. Upon receiving notification of a suspected case of head lice, the school nurse or clinic aide will examine the child's hair to verify the report.
3. When a case is found, all children in the classroom will be examined.
4. If the student changes classes during the day, students in each of the infested child's classes will be checked.
5. At this point, students in other schools who may have been contaminated will be checked.

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A. Administrative Handling

1. Each infestation will be recorded in a notebook with name, grade, teacher, the date the infestation was discovered, and the date the student returned to school after successful treatment. A new entry should be made in the book each time a new infestation is found, even if the child has previously been treated and declared free of head lice.
2. Infested students will be sent home immediately with a letter explaining recommendations for treatment.
3. Proof of treatment (box top from medication or note from the health nurse, or physician) will be required on return to school, and Health Services will reexamine the child before readmission to school. The student must be free of nits as well as live lice before returning to school to prevent further infestations. Therefore, all infested persons should be reexamined two weeks after readmission. Parents should notify the school when they discover head lice on their child.
4. If the child has not been satisfactorily treated, the child will be refused readmission to school and sent home with a second note.
5. If the child returns untreated a third time, or if it is determined the principal knows in advance that the family cannot afford treatment, the nurse after principal notification may do one or both of the following:
 - a. Request direct follow-up by the local health department.
 - b. Provide enough medication to treat the infested student and infested members of the household from a supply furnished by the local health department or the school system.
6. State and local authorities generally have the authority to isolate, segregate or quarantine individuals with communicable conditions likely to affect the health of others.

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B. Guidelines

1. If head lice infestation is suspected, assistance from Health Services should be pursued.
2. If lice are evident, seen, the child must immediately be sent home with instructions for parents.
 - a. Letter to parents that you child has head lice.
 - b. Letter to parents that your child has been exposed to head lice in the classroom.

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Revised: January 10, 2012

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FIRST LETTER TO PARENTS

Dear Parents:

There is evidence of head lice in the Amelia County Schools. Health Department recommendations for treatment are being carried out in an effort to keep this problem under control. We are asking each parent's cooperation and assistance by checking your children's heads for lice. The nits (eggs) look like a flake of dandruff (whitish, pear shaped) on a strand of hair. However, the nit clings to the hair and is not easily removed. The nit is not communicable at this stage; however, the louse itself hatches from the nit in about six (6) days and lays more eggs. The louse can go from one person's head to another, usually through coats, hats, combs, towels, etc. (they do not often jump from one head to another).

Should you discover its and/or lice in your child's hair, treatment is necessary and should be carried out right away. It should be continued until all nits are gone. You may purchase an effective product for lice at the local drugstore. NIX is the most effective product you can purchase. It is more expensive than some but it requires only one treatment. Products such as RID or QUELL are effective, but do not kill the nits and require a child's head to be treated again in 6 to 10 days. No doctor's prescription is necessary to purchase these products. Attached are Health Department recommendations for treating lice.

Please do not become alarmed. Every effort is being made to assure the health of your child while school. With your cooperation this problem can be effectively controlled. We do ask that you notify the school if you find lice or nits in your child's hair. We will then be able to check other students in the class and this will help us to control the problem.

If you have questions, please call us at 561-xxxx.

Sincerely yours,

Principal

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Health Department Recommendations

I. Treatment

- A. Several shampoos to kill lice are on the market. Some can be bought over-the-counter as your local drugstore, but others require a prescription.
- B. All persons in the household who have head lice should be treated.

II. Procedure

- A. Remove all clothing
 - B. Use shampoo as directed on label
 - C. Put on clean clothes after shampooing
- III. Wash—using very hot water—all clothing and bed linens used by persons with head lice.
- IV. Treatment takes only about an hour. Your child will be readmitted to school immediately after treatment is judged to have been effective by school officials.
- V. All initially infested persons should be retreated in 8-10 days. Your child will be rechecked at that time.
- VI. To prevent spread, persons with head lice should not share articles that come in contact with the head, neck or shoulders (combs, brushes, hats, coats, towels, etc.)

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