

Griswold Community School Pediculosis Procedure

1. Parents are asked to screen children at least weekly at home during the entire school year for presence of head lice. This would allow for quicker recognition of lice and prompt treatment, although no disease is associated with head lice.
2. When a student is found to have live lice or nits at school, the parents will be contacted so the most current treatment plan can be discussed. The student will be allowed to stay in school.
3. Teachers are encouraged to refer any student seen itching or scratching their scalp excessively to the nurse's office to be examined for the presence of lice.
4. We strongly suggest that parents communicate with their friends and day care providers when head lice has been discovered.
5. It is our responsibility to prevent stigmatism and maintain the student's privacy as well as the family's right to confidentiality, so no classroom notes will be sent home due to head lice.
6. Bear in mind that head lice are an annoyance, not a public health crisis.

Policy adopted from National Association of School Nurses position statement.

Pediculosis (head lice) are tiny gray wingless insects that bite and live on the scalp, hair, and back of the neck. Nits are white oval lice eggs that look like grains of sugar.

- People get head lice as a result of direct contact from another person or contact with their personal items such as combs, hats, and pillows.

- Signs of head lice include head scratching and intense scalp itching, redness or small bite marks on the scalp, and white oval specks that look like grains of sugar on the hair shaft.

- A head louse is not a sign of any lack of cleanliness or personal hygiene. Please communicate any infestation to the school, your children's friends, and your day care provider.

- Compounding the problem of head lice is the fact that the "standard" treatments of special shampoos are no longer working. Lice have built up a resistance to these treatments. Specialized shampoos do not penetrate the nit. It will only kill the live lice and the nits may continue to hatch.

- The recommended treatment is a two-week process. The first day use medicated shampoo then followed by daily use of ordinary shampoo and conditioner. Then you need to comb the hair with a fine tooth comb while it is still wet, as the lice are immobilized by the wet conditions. Between strokes, clean the comb with a wet paper towel to remove the scalp debris and lice. Since nits are cemented onto the hair shaft, you may need to pull the nits off with your fingernails in order to do a thorough and complete job. A minimal emphasis is placed on the environment. It would be helpful to vacuum, wash pillowcases, sheets, and the clothes that the child was wearing on the day of diagnosis, but the emphasis should be on the daily washing and combing process.

- Children may remain in school during the two-week treatment process.

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