



School District of Holmen

HEAD LICE NOTIFICATION

Due to the presence of a case of head lice in your child's classroom, we would like to share the following information with you. Please take some time to check your child for lice and/or nits. If you are not sure what to look for, or have any questions regarding the issue, please call the Health Office and we can check for you.

What are head lice?

Head lice are tiny, wingless insects that live close to the human scalp. They feed on human blood. Without blood meals, lice will die within 1-2 days off the host.



Nits are tiny, teardrop-shaped lice eggs that are often yellowish or white. Nits are attached to the hair shaft, close to the scalp. Nits can look similar to dandruff, but cannot be easily removed or brushed off.



Adult lice are the size of a sesame seed and appear tan to grayish white. They can live for about 30 days on the human scalp.

How do head lice spread?

Direct head-to-head contact is the most common way lice are spread. Head lice do not fly or jump, they move by crawling. Items such as clothes, combs, hats, helmets, towels, linens, stuffed animals, and hair accessories also aid in the spread of head lice (although less likely). Please discourage your child from lending or sharing personal items mentioned above.

What are the signs my child may have head lice?

The presence of lice or nits in the hair is considered an active infestation. Signs and symptoms of infestation include: • Tickling feeling on the scalp or in the hair • Itching (caused by the bites of the louse) • Irritability and difficulty sleeping (lice are more active in the dark) • Sores on the head (caused by scratching, which can sometimes become infected).

If my child has head lice, what should I do?

- **Treatment:**

There are several different lice treatments, medicated (prescription or over-the-counter) and non-medicated. *Research treatment options and pick the best one for your child!* The school Health Office, your health care provider and health departments can give you resources on lice and treatment options. Read the label and follow the directions on the treatment you choose.

Lice treatments most often kill the live lice but **do not guarantee the killing of unhatched nits (eggs)**. This is why a second treatment is often necessary in 7-10 days to kill any newly hatched lice before they can produce new eggs. It is also very important to look through and comb the hair daily to remove nits. You can use a store bought nit comb, however do not rely on it to remove all nits. You will need to manually go through the hair and use your fingernails to pull the nits off of the hair shaft. Make sure to divide the hair into sections as you go through it. Have tape or a trash bag available to put lice/nits in/on and discard. Even under the best conditions, nits may be missed. Check the infested person daily for *at least* two weeks until all signs of the infestation are gone. Utilize a well lit room in the home to aid in seeing the lice/nits.

- **Environmental Cleaning:**

Machine wash in hot water & dry on high heat: Clothing, outdoor wear, toys (stuffed animals, etc), hair accessories, hats, pillows and bedding. If the item cannot be washed as described, it must be sealed in an airtight plastic bag for two weeks.

Vacuum: Upholstered furniture, rugs, mattresses, carpeting and car seats. Dispose of the vacuum bags, or if no bags, you may choose to spray the inside of the vacuum with a lice control spray.

- **Communication:**

Notify the school Health Office directly so they may assist you with the treatment process. Your child will need to have their head checked in the Health Office before returning to class. Also notify any potential contacts (others in the home, dual households, daycare, friends, family, etc.). Make sure to check others in the home for the presence of lice/nits.

Adapted from NASN & Center for Disease Control and Prevention