

WHARTON
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT



**LICE PREVENTION, CONTROL,
AND TREATMENT PROTOCOL
UPDATED- 2014**

Student Health Services
District Nurse Raquel Aragus

Live Lice and Nit Prevention, Control, and Treatment Protocol

Initial Identification of Infestation

Cases of lice should be confirmed by the RN, School Nurse, or trained WISD staff.

Live Lice

- All students identified with **live lice** will be sent home after contacting parent/guardian by phone.
- Parents/Guardians will be advised to treat their child for head lice. The name of the treatment product must be provided by the parent/guardian on the treatment letter. (See Resource Section) Educational materials about treatment and prevention should be given and explained to parent/guardian.
- After treatment has been completed, the student can return to school.
- Based on the AAP, 2010 recommendations, alert letters will only be sent home in the event of a high percentage of students infested in a classroom. There is no need to send home alert letters for “2 or more students” infested as this may cause unnecessary public alarm.

Nits

- Students identified with **nits only** will have their parent/guardian contacted to see if treatment has taken place within the last seven days. The name of the treatment product must be provided by the parent/guardian on the treatment letter. (See Resource Section)
- If treatment **has** occurred within the last week, the student may stay in school. Educational material about nit removal and prevention of lice should be provided to parent/guardian.
- If treatment **has not** occurred in the last seven days, the student should be sent home for treatment and removal of lice (AAP, 2010). Educational materials about treatment and prevention of lice should be provided and explained to parent/guardian. Once treatment has been completed, the student can return to school.

Requirements for Readmission to School

- Student must bring proof of treatment or a statement verifying treatment signed by parent/guardian.
- If the student has been treated and provides proof of treatment the student may be readmitted to school
- If live lice are found at re-check, the school nurse should be contacted to assess the adequacy of treatment and counsel the family before sending the student home.
- The student may remain in school unless otherwise recommended by the health team.

Treatment Failures and Frequent Re-infestations

- If live lice are found following treatment, the school nurse should be notified. She will investigate and make further recommendations to the family.

Classroom Control Measures:

- The Health Team will provide teachers with the "Checklist for Classroom Lice Control." Contact the school nurse for any questions regarding classroom lice control.
- Teachers are expected to follow the guidelines to prevent the spread of lice.
- At all times, schools are encouraged to discontinue fabric-covered items, i.e., pillows, blankets used by more than one child. Teachers may request storage bags to separate all coats/sweaters. Teachers, Assistants, and Monitors should not allow piling of coats.

Responsibilities

Student Health Services

- Screening students sent to health room displaying symptoms
- Screening will be done on an individual basis for students reporting or demonstrating symptoms (i.e. lice visible in hair, scratching scalp). Current evidence does not support the efficacy and cost effectiveness of classroom or school wide screening for decreasing the incidence of head lice among school children (Centers for Disease Control, 2007) (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2010)
- The health team has educational materials about lice available in the health room for students, staff and parents. The school nurse will submit newsletter articles to educate parents and staff regarding lice.
- The school nurse will provide health teaching to students, staff, and parents regarding prevention, detection and treatment of lice as needed.

Quick Care/WISD staff

- All staff members should be familiar with the signs and symptoms of lice infestation. Detection of lice or nits, or suspicion of lice or nits, should be promptly reported to the school nurse or designated, trained office staff.
- If the RN or school nurse is not on campus, WISD staff will screen students sent by the teacher suspected of having lice.

Teaching Staff

- Survey the classroom environment regularly for students displaying signs of lice or items in the classroom that could be contributing to the spread of lice.
- Implement the “Checklist for Classroom Lice Control” and make appropriate changes. (See Appendix for Checklist).
- Send students to nurse office for inspection by the school nurse if lice visible in hair or scratching scalp.

Parent/Guardian

- Parents/Guardians need to make lice screening a part of their family routine. Parents should check their children's head at least weekly.
- Parents/Guardians should follow the recommendations and/or treatment guidelines from Student Health Services.

Community Education and Cooperation

- The lice prevention, control, and treatment protocol will be shared with WISD staff and staff of after-school programs for implementation in these programs, thus allowing for consistency when children are in school environments.
- The lice prevention, control, and treatment protocol and educational information may be shared as requested with Wharton's private or parochial schools and with major after-school organizations, i.e., athletic or recreational facilities.
- Educational materials such as handouts, books and posters are available from WISD Student Health Services.

Lice

Resource/Parent Letter Section

Screening Procedure

1. The school nurse and trained WISD staff will be responsible for screening. Classroom teachers are responsible for classroom surveillance.
2. Provide as much privacy as possible. Do NOT indicate that a student has lice/nits in the presence of the other students.
3. Use two objects long enough to separate the hair and expose the scalp. Non-sterile cotton-tipped applicators, coffee stir sticks, etc. can be used.
4. Check the back of the head and around the ears. If the hair is short in the back, check the area of the head where the hair is longer. If the child is itching, check the entire head.
5. Separate the hair and look for nits and moving lice. Nits will not move when the strand of hair is flicked. Dandruff, hair casts, lint and other debris will move when the strand of hair is flicked. Dispose of cotton tipped applicators or coffee stir sticks after one use.
6. Wash hands or change gloves.

General Information

What are Lice?

Infestation by head lice, also known as pediculosis capitis is a common problem that crosses all geographic and socioeconomic boundaries in this country.

Lice depend on their hosts for food (blood) and warmth. Lice are found specifically on the scalp because this area is warm and dark. Lice cannot live long separated from this source of food and warmth.

The adult head louse is a wingless insect about 2.1 to 3.3 mm, about the size of a sesame seed. The living insects can be difficult to see because they run quickly from the light. Females lay 6-10 eggs per day that are incrustated in pearly white egg-cases called nits. Live nits are usually found 1/4th inch or less from the scalp where they are fixed firmly to the hair shaft with a glue like substance that makes them difficult to remove. This characteristic helps distinguishing nits from other hair debris like dirt and dandruff.

After 5-10 days the nits hatch to produce juvenile lice called nymphs. The nymphs mature fully, able to lay eggs in about two weeks. The entire cycle takes about 21 days.

Treatment Options

Currently there are four different compounds commercially available in the U.S. for treatment of lice infestation. All pediculicides (chemical formulation that kill lice) work by interfering with the nervous system of the louse.

The first two are available over the counter without a prescription: Pyrethrin (RID, A200 etc.) and permethrin (NIX creme rinse). However, a prescription is required if the cost is to be covered by Medicaid. The others, Lindane (Kwell) and Malathion (Ovide) are available only by prescription. They require a prescription because they have a higher rate of neurological toxicity. For resistant cases of pediculosis, prescription Elimate 5% topically to scalp or Bactrim by mouth has been used. All of these pediculicides should be used externally and directions should be followed very carefully. Frequent treatment application is discouraged unless medical assessment has been made as to why re-infestation is occurring.

Olive oil and mayonnaise have also been used effectively as an adjunct treatment to treat lice. The method of action is thought to be suffocation of the lice. Therefore, to be effective the oil or mayonnaise must remain on scalp for more than four hours at a time and repeated every 4 days for 3 weeks.

Checklist for Classroom Lice Control

- _____ Play items (hats, wigs, dress up clothes, etc.) cleaned after each child's use
- _____ Sweaters, backpacks, and coats hung separately on hooks and not touching. Sweaters, coats, and hats can often be placed in each student's backpack
- _____ Children's personal items (combs, brushes, hats, scarves, sweaters, coats etc.) are not shared
- _____ Carpet is vacuumed daily
- _____ No sharing of cloth or upholstered pillows, mats, etc.
- _____ Nap items (pillows, blankets, towels, etc.) are stored separately in a cubby or plastic bag and taken home at least weekly to be washed.
- _____ Headphones are wiped with disinfectant after each child's use
- _____ Observation of children for:
 - Nits/lice in hair (on nape of neck, over ears, and within ¼ inch of scalp)
 - Scratching of head and neck

INSTRUCTIONS FOR TREATMENT AND CONTROL OF HEAD LICE AND NITS

- **Use a pediculicide** lice shampoo such as Rid (non-prescription), or R&C (non-prescription). You might want to ask your doctor or pharmacist for recommendations. Follow directions on the bottle exactly. Nix, a non-prescription lotion is also effective and does not require a second treatment. **Do NOT use flea shampoo or gasoline. These are very dangerous and not proven to be effective.**
- Repeat pediculicide (lice) shampoo treatment of the hair in 7 to 10 days (depending upon the pediculicide used) to assure that if any nits have hatched, the new lice will be killed before they can lay more eggs.
- **Comb out the nits:** Using a good metal nit comb, comb the hair section by section.
- **Clean environment:** To address this problem household cleaning should be done on the same day as the child's treatment.
 - Soak combs and brushes for one hour in a pediculicide lice shampoo or five to ten minutes in hot water (130°).
 - Change into freshly washed clothes after treatment.
- Change and wash all sheets, pillowcases, and blankets in hot water and machine dry on hot setting.
- Wash all previously worn clothes, coats and hats.
- Vacuum rugs, carpets and upholstered furniture, including the upholstery in the car.
- Pillows, stuffed animals or non-washable items must be either dry cleaned, washed, sealed in a plastic bag for 7 days or placed in a dryer for 20 minutes of hot air.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MAYONNAISE TREATMENT

- **Olive oil or mayonnaise treatment:** Olive oil or mayonnaise may be helpful as an additional treatment following the use of a lice shampoo because it smothers and kills active head lice
- Cover the entire scalp and hair with olive oil or real mayonnaise (do not use low fat or mayonnaise substitute). Then cover the head with plastic wrap or shower cap. Leave the olive oil or mayonnaise on at least 4 hours or overnight.
- Repeat treatment every 4 days for three weeks. This is to coincide with the life cycle of the louse.
- If you choose not to use a pediculicide lice shampoo, use the olive oil or mayonnaise treatment for 2 days in a row in addition to all other designated days. Leave the olive oil or mayonnaise in the hair for the nit removal.

Helpful Hints for Nit Removal

Removing nits is the most important step in preventing the recurrence of head lice. For the initial treatment, use a pediculicide shampoo or treatment to kill the live lice and then:

- Comb the hair with a regular comb if the hair is thick and/or long to remove the tangles.
- Comb the hair into one-inch sections and remove the nits in each section by using a metal nit or flea comb.
- A metal nit comb can be reused if washed and boiled.
- Remove remaining nits by hand if necessary.
- Remember the key to successful lice treatment is complete removal of **ALL** nits.
 - To aid in the removal of nits you may want to apply olive oil and let it set 4 hours, making the nits easier to remove. Other over the counter products that you may buy for nit removal are Clear, Step 1, and mayonnaise.

Helpful Hints for Cleaning the Environment

- Soak combs and brushes for one hour in a pediculicide lice shampoo or five to ten minutes in hot water (130°).
- Change into freshly washed clothes after treatment.
- Change and wash all sheets, pillowcases, and blankets in hot water and machine dry on hot setting.
- Wash all previously worn clothes, coats and hats.
- Vacuum rugs, carpets and upholstered furniture, including the upholstery in the car.
- Pillows, stuffed animals or non-washable items must be either dry cleaned, washed, sealed in a plastic bag for 7 days or placed in a dryer for 20 minutes of hot air.

Sugerencias útiles para quitar las liendres

Quitar las liendres es el paso más importante para prevenir la recurrencia de piojos en la cabeza. Para el tratamiento inicial, use un champú pediculicida o tratamiento para matar las liendres y después:

- Peine el cabello con un peine regular si el cabello es grueso o largo, para desenredarlo.
- Peine el cabello en secciones de una pulgada y quite las liendres en cada sección usando un peine de metal para liendres o pulgas.
- Puede volver a usar un peine de metal si lo lava y hierve.
- Si es necesario, quite con los dedos las liendres que queden.
- Recuerde que para el tratamiento para liendres tendrá éxito si quita completamente **TODAS** las liendres.
- Para ayudar a quitar las liendres puede usar aceite de oliva y dejarlo reposar en el cabello por 4 horas, lo que hará más fácil quitarlas. Otros productos que puede comprar para quitar liendres sin receta médica son Clear, Step 1, mayonesa y una solución de vinagre y agua (una ración de vinagre por una de agua).

Sugerencias útiles para limpiar su entorno

- Remojar cepillos y peines por una hora en un champú pediculicida para piojos, o de cinco a diez minutos en agua caliente (130°).
- Después del tratamiento, ponerse ropa limpia.
- Cambiar y lavar todas las sábanas, fundas y colchas en agua caliente y secarlas en la secadora a temperatura caliente.
- Lavar toda la ropa, abrigos y sombreros que hayan sido usados.
- Aspirar alfombras, tapetes, incluyendo la tapicería del auto.
- Almohadas, animales de peluche o artículos que no se pueden lavar deben lavarse en seco, lavarse con agua y jabón, ponerse en una bolsa de plástico herméticamente cerrada por 7 días o colocarlos en la secadora de ropa por 20 minutos en aire caliente.

Wharton Independent School District

Teacher/Grade: _____ / _____

DATE: _____

RE: HEAD LICE

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Your child, _____, has signs and symptoms of head lice. Even though they do not jump or fly, they can be spread from one person to another by sharing combs, brushes, clothing and hats. Head lice can happen to anyone. It is not a sign of poor health habits or being dirty.

To control the spread of head lice, your child may not return to school until after he/she has been treated.

It is recommended that all household members be checked and treated the same day. The student will be checked for lice and upon returning to school by the health team or school office staff. Please have your child report to the office before going to class.

Working together we can meet this challenge. I am available to discuss any questions you might have concerning this matter.

School Nurse –Raquel Araguz

(979)532-6882

Telephone Number

The following information is required before your student can re-enter the class room. Please complete and have your child take it to the health office when she/he returns to school.

Child's Name

Date of Treatment

Parent's Signature

Name of Treatment/Shampoo/Rinse

Wharton Independent School District

TO: Parents of _____ class

FROM: Children's/WISD Student Health Services

SUBJECT: HEAD LICE IN THE CLASSROOM

FOR YOUR INFORMATION: There was a case of head lice reported in your child's class today. We are sending you this letter to inform you of head lice and to encourage you to **check your child this evening and at least once a week**, so we can keep the situation under control.

Head lice are parasitic insects which live on the scalp. The signs and symptoms of head lice are:

- a. Persistent itching and scratching of the scalp.
- b. Live lice are white and about 1/16 inch long.
- c. The lice eggs are called nits and are shiny grayish, unlike dandruff they do not come off easily.

NOTE: Nits are shiny, grayish and look like dandruff, but won't flick off.

Head lice do not hop, jump, or fly. They crawl from one person to another by direct contact and by use of infested articles. To control and avoid lice:

- a. Do not share hats, coats, headgear, combs or brushes.
- b. Inspect hair weekly for presence of lice and nits.
- c. Notify your child's school, day care center, or nursery if you find lice/nits.
- d. Treat promptly if you find lice/nits.

Children with head lice are not allowed to return to school until they have received the recommended treatment and have been cleared by the school staff or the health team. It is important to notify the school if you find that your child has an active case and has received treatment.

(979)532-6882

School Nurse- Raquel Araguz

Telephone Number

******If you identify lice on your child, please complete information below.******

The following information is required before your student can re-enter the class room. Please complete and have your child take it to the health office when she/he returns to school.

Child's Name

Date of Treatment

Parent's Signature

Name of Treatment/Shampoo/Rinse

Wharton Independent School District

Teacher/Grade: _____ / _____

DATE: _____

RE: NITS

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Your child _____ has nits in his/her hair.

Removing nits is the most important step in preventing the recurrence of head lice.

The 'Helpful Hints' attached to this letter may be useful to you in getting the nits out.

Working together we can meet this challenge. I am available to discuss any questions you might have concerning this matter.

Sincerely,

School Nurse –Raquel Araguz

(979)532-6882

Telephone Number

_____ My child has received treatment for lice in the past 7 days.

Name of Treatment/Shampoo/Rinse / Date of Treatment

_____ It has been longer than 7 days since my child has received treatment for lice.

References for change in policy:

Center for Disease Control

Division of Parasitic Diseases (DPD)

National Center for Zoonotic, Vector-Borne, and Enteric Diseases (ZVED)

Information for Schools, Information for Parents

Content Source: Page last reviewed: May 16, 2007

National Association of School Nurses

Policy Statement

Nit Free Policies in the Management of Pediculosis:

Adopted: November 1999 Revised: July 2004

American Academy of Pediatrics

Clinical Report-Head Lice PEDIATRICS July 26, 2010

Immunizations & Infectious Diseases: An Informed Parent's Guide

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Head Lice

PEDIATRICS Vol. 110 No. 3 September 2002, pp. 638-643

A statement of re-affirmation for this policy was published on May 1, 2009

Pediculosis Capitis (**Head Lice**)

Red Book; 2009: 495-497

Committee on School Health and Committee on Infectious Diseases **Barbara L. Frankowski, Leonard B. Weiner, Pediatrics 2002; 110; 638-643**

Lice, Nits, and School Policy

PEDIATRICS Vol. 107 No. 5 May 2001, pp. 1011-1015

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF STATE HEALTH SERVICES RECOMMENDATIONS ON "NO-NIT" POLICIES IN SCHOOLS, September 2007

Texas Administrative Code, Title 25, Part 1, Chapter 97, Subchapter A, Rule 97.7, Update 2013