

Folsom Board of Education District Policy Manual

Students

Series 5000

Pediculosis / Head Lice

Policy 5132.7

Date Adopted: February 28, 2012

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The Folsom Elementary School has developed this head lice (pediculosis) policy with the parent body, teachers, the Community (School Nurse) and the Department of Health. The aim of the policy is to ensure a consistent, coordinated and cooperative approach to head lice management for the school community.

Responsibilities

The Parent's/Guardian's responsibility is:

- to learn about head lice infestation and management by reading the Department of Health's Head Lice Fact Sheet.
- to treat their child's hair immediately if the child has head lice, using the advice in the Head Lice Fact Sheet.
- to inform the school (and other contacts) if their child has a head lice infestation and to confirm that treatment has commenced.
- to understand and to follow the school's head lice policy.
- to check their child's hair for head lice infestation regularly.

The Community School Nurse's role is:

- to provide information, advice and education to parent/guardians and the school community about head lice management.
- to provide additional assistance for families experiencing persistent head lice infestation.

The School's role is:

- to develop, implement and maintain a current head lice management policy.
- to ensure that all parents/guardians and staff are aware of the school's head lice policy and that they are provided with a copy of the Head Lice Fact Sheet and school policy at enrollment and upon request.

How Head Lice Information Will Be Disseminated

The school will undertake the following steps to ensure dissemination of accurate up-to-date head lice treatment advice within the school community:

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The Department of Health's Head Lice Fact Sheet will be:

- included in the enrollment package.
- available in the School Office waiting area and displayed in the Community Parent Room, with copies provided for parents/guardians to take.
- sent home to parents/guardians via the school newsletter at the beginning of the school year.
- promoted consistently in the fortnightly school newsletter.

Other Head Lice Education Strategies

- Head lice information will be included in class activities where appropriate, e.g., personal development (identify head lice and how to comb out), science (life cycle of the head louse) and drama.
- Head lice management sessions will be provided to individual parents/guardians/caregivers.
- Parents/guardians who need further advice or who experience difficulty with treatment may be referred to the Community (School) Nurse for assistance.

What Will Happen When a Child is Found to have Head Lice

- When Pediculosis (head lice) is discovered, the parent/guardian will be called and made aware.
- The student will return to class and the Head Lice fact sheet will be sent home with the student.
- The parent/guardian will complete the over-the-counter shampoo treatment and thoroughly comb the student's hair with a nit comb.
- The parent/guardian will continue to do the weekly head lice shampoo treatments and daily combing of the student's hair with the nit comb for at least 3 weeks, or until there are no nits seen.
- The parent/guardian will check every family member and treat, if necessary.
- The school nurse will check the student's hair on a weekly basis for the next 3 weeks, and then as needed.

Legal References

NJSA 18A:40-7, -8, -10, -11 Exclusion of pupils who are ill

HEAD LICE - Fact sheet

Head lice are a nuisance, but not a health hazard. Anyone can get head lice. People do not get head lice because they are not clean. Children often get lice because they are frequently in head-to-head contact with other children. Lice can be easily passed from child to child, child to adult, adult to adult.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Head lice are tiny, flat insects. They cannot jump or fly, but they can crawl quickly. They are 1-2 mm long, greyish-white in colour, and hard to see.

An adult female louse (adult lice) can lay hundreds of eggs. The very tiny eggs, called nits, are half the size of a pinhead. They look like dandruff, and are firmly glued to the hair close to the scalp and cannot be flicked off. Head lice do not live long and their eggs hatch near the warm scalp in 7 to 10 days.

Itching and scratching are common signs of head lice, however there may be no symptoms at all. Since other scalp conditions also cause itching, the best way to check for lice is to look for nits. If you find nits, act quickly.

HOW TO GET RID OF LICE

If you find lice or nits a Pharmaceutical treatment shampoo or creme rinse is the most proven method for getting rid of lice. The most important step towards successful treatment is to REMOVE ALL THE NITS. It is not necessary to treat someone just because they have been exposed to lice. Treat only those people who actually have live lice.

TREATMENT OPTIONS

I. Pharmaceutical Treatment

Lice treatment shampoos or creme rinses can be purchased at the drug store without a prescription from a doctor. In most provinces these products are available directly from your pharmacist. It is important to speak to your Pharmacist if you have any questions.

1. Consult with your doctor regarding treatment:

- of children under age 2.
- of persons with seizure disorders.
- for lice on eyebrows, eyelashes or beards.
- if the skin of the scalp is broken or infected.
- of persons with asthma, allergies or cancer.
- of persons who are pregnant or breastfeeding.

You can also call Motherisk at the Hospital for Sick Children at 416-813-6780 for information.

2. When Choosing a product, read the list of contents.

Do not use a product if the person being treated is allergic to any of listed ingredients. Follow the directions very carefully.

Pyrethrins with synergized piperonyl butoxide (e.g. R&C™ Shampoo+Conditioner) should not be used for anyone with a known allergy to ragweed, chrysanthemums, synthetic pyrethroids, or pyrethrin.

Permethrin (e.g. Kwellada-P® Creme Rinse and NIX™ Creme Rinse) should not be used on a person with a known allergy to chrysanthemums, synthetic pyrethroids, or pyrethrin.

Do not use on children under age 2 unless directed by a physician.

3. Using Head Lice products

- Follow lice treatment instructions exactly, some products are applied to dry hair, others to wet.
- Timing is important. If the product is rinsed off too soon, lice and eggs may not be killed. If left on too long, you are causing unnecessary chemical exposure.
- Rinse the child's hair under a tap (instead of the shower or bathtub) to limit skin exposure and prevent the child from swallowing the product.
- These products should not be used near the eyes, nose or mouth. Hold a towel tightly over the eyes to protect them during treatment.
- When treating another person wear plastic or rubber gloves and wash your hands well.
- Store unused head lice products in a safe area away from the reach of young children.

4. Second Treatments

- Head lice products kill the head lice and many of the eggs. One treatment usually does not kill all the eggs. Apply a second treatment in 7 to 10 days to kill any newly hatched lice before they can lay eggs. Repeat the treatment once only.
- Remove ALL the nits and remember to check the head regularly (see *Removal nits*).

If head lice persist following two treatments and reinfestation has been ruled out consult your physician or local pharmacist.

II. Alternative Treatment

Home remedies or frequent washing with regular shampoo are not effective in getting rid of head lice. As with all lice treatments, remember to remove all nits (see Removal of Nits).

Caution:

- Do not leave child unattended with a shower cap or saran wrap on their head.
- Do not leave the shower cap or saran wrap on while sleeping.
- Do not use vinegar on the scalp if it is already irritated.

REMOVAL OF NITS

- The removal of all nits will take several hours.
- Have your child sit in a comfortable chair and find an activity to occupy them (e.g. watching a movie)
- Work in bright, natural light to help see the nits.
- Comb the wet hair with a regular comb to remove tangles.
- Divide the hair into sections and pin back the sections not being worked on, like a hairdresser does.
- Use your thumbnail against your first finger to strip the nits from the hair. Start at the root of the strand of hair and pull out to the end of the strand of hair.
- Place the nits in a bag or a cup of water.
- Remove all nits from the strand of hair.
- As an alternative, you can comb out the nits using a special comb for removing nits (i.e. comb teeth are less than 0.3 mm apart. This is easier following treatment with a lice product.
- Continue until all nits are removed.
- Check the hair each day. If you find additional nits (3-5 per day) this may be a sign that live lice are still on the head.
- Be sure to pay close attention to the back of the neck and behind the ears (lice like these areas because it is warm).

CLOSE CONTACTS

Close contacts may include family members, grandparents, close friends, neighbours, or babysitters. Close contacts and family members should be checked and treated if infested. Tell your child's school or childcare centre so other parents can be told to check their children's heads. If close contacts have lice ensure that they are treated at the same time so they do not pass the lice back to you or your child leading to reinfestation.

CLEANING PERSONAL ITEMS

When you are treating for lice you need to wash combs and brushes, head gear, hats, jackets, pillowcases, sheets, and towels with hot water. The heat of the water and/or the hot cycle of your clothes dryer will kill any live lice or nits. Any items, which cannot be washed, should be placed in a plastic bag and sealed for 2 weeks.

POINTS TO REMEMBER

- An untreated person among close contacts can pass lice back to you or your child.
- Head lice do not live on dogs, cats or other animals, only on humans.
- Keeping hair short will not prevent head lice.
- Check young school age children regularly for head lice especially if there is an outbreak.
- Discourage children from sharing hats, scarves, combs, hair accessories and helmets.

*For more information please visit
www.liceguide.com or www.lice.ca or contact your local Public Health Department.*