

When Can My Child Return to School?

As soon as the shampoo treatment has been done and you have removed all lice and as many nits as possible.

An adult must accompany your child to the school nurse's office when he/she returns to school.

The school nurse will look carefully through your child's hair. If no head lice are seen, your child may re-enter school.

If the school nurse finds nits, and they are less than the previous examination, she will work with you to remove the nits and the child may enter school.



Resources

Your school nurse is always ready to help you.

Your child's pediatrician can help, particularly with re-occurring head lice infestations.

On-line resources:

National Association of School Nursing Pediculosis Position Statement

www.nasn.org/Default.aspx?tabid=237

American Academy of Pediatrics policy on head lice
<http://aapolicy.aappublicatons.org/cgi/content/full/pediatrics;110/3/638>

Harvard School of Public Health
www.hsph.harvard.edu/headlice.html

Fairhaven Schools Health Care Services

School Health Care
Services Informational
Brochure



Head Lice Information for Parents and Guardians

Fairhaven Schools Health Care Services



What to look for and what to do



What are Head Lice and How are The Spread?

Head Lice are tiny wingless insects that feed on the human scalp. The eggs of head lice are called nits.

Head lice crawl very quickly, but do not fly or jump.

Head lice are spread primarily by direct head to head contact, but also from sharing personal items such as combs, brushes and other hair accessories.

Sleepovers among friends and relatives are thought to be the most common method of spreading infestations.

How Do I know if My Child Has Head Lice?

If you observe your child scratching his/her head, that could be a sign of possible infestation.

If parents or friends have notified you that their child has head lice, you should check your child.

If the school nurse notifies you.

What is the Best Way to look for Head Lice?

Examine your child's head under a bright light or near a sunny window. Examine small areas (about 1 inch at a time) by parting the hair with a comb.

Look for eggs(nits) that look like dandruff, but are difficult to remove.

Hatched eggs are whitish to sandy color, intact eggs are harder to see and more tan in color. Both will be seen on the hair shaft within an inch of the scalp.

Adult lice travel so quickly that they are difficult to see.

How Do I Remove The Head Lice?

First, kill the lice.

Use a lice killing shampoo product. Consult your pharmacist or child's physician to determine the best treatment for your child. Follow the directions carefully on the product label.

Using the fine tooth comb that comes with the shampoo product, comb the hair thoroughly. It is best to do small sections at a time to remove all visible lice and eggs. This is a very important step.

Next

Re-inspect the hair. If nits are still seen on the hair strands a solution of water and vinegar may help loosen the nit "glue". Once this is applied, re-comb.

Some nits may still be attached and need to be removed individually by putting them down and off the hair strands using your fingertips..

Removing nits is very time consuming. Re-combing with the fine tooth comb may need to continue daily for up to 4 weeks.

The last step in ending infestation is cleaning the house and belongings. Concentrate on areas of the house and belongings the child uses the most (bedroom, coats, hats, bed linens).

Machine wash all washable items in hot water and dry in a hot dryer. These items include clothing, jackets & hats, bed linens and towels.

Place non-wash-able articles (e.g. stuffed animals) in a sealed plastic bag for approximately 2 weeks or send to the cleaners.

Soak combs and brushes in hot water or clean with lice killing shampoo.

Vacuum rugs, upholstered furniture, mattresses, etc. Seal and throw away the vacuum bag when finished.

Finally

Hair should be rechecked daily for the next 7 – 12 days to make sure the hair is free of head lice.