

Pediculosis

Category	Health and Safety		
Subject	Pediculosis		
Adopted		Revised	April 2021
Policies Used / Referenced	8-815		

Policy Statement

Pediculosis (head lice) is an infestation of the hairy parts of the body with the eggs, larvae or adults of lice. Monitoring and controlling the transmission of head lice requires cooperation and support among schools, Public Health and families.

Procedures

At the beginning of each school year, the Principal, or designate, shall provide families with information or conduct parent sessions on the identification and treatment of head lice (See Appendix A and B). Families should be directed to the [ASD-S website](#) for more information.

It is recommended that families periodically check their child’s head to determine if they have lice or nits.

If there is an infestation of head lice at the school, or when a family notifies school officials that their child(ren) has head lice, the Principal or designate will:

- a) Decide whether to inform
 - i) the families of students who have been exposed to head lice at the school;
 - or
 - ii) the families of the entire school population.
- b) Communicate to families, based on the decision above, that this is not an emergency. Head lice do not cause disease.
- c) Ensure that all families have information about the [identification and treatment](#) of head lice.

Any student who has **live lice** should be sent home. Students may return to school when all live lice have been removed and treatment has been started.

Appendix A: Head Lice Fact Sheet

What are head lice?

Head lice are tiny insects that live on the human scalp. These insects lay eggs called nits, which stick to the hair close to the scalp. Head lice do not spread disease. Having head lice does not mean you are not clean.

How are head lice spread?

Head lice are spread by head-to-head contact with another person who has head lice. They cannot fly, jump or swim. Head lice can be transferred to someone else from brushes and combs. Lice are less likely to live on clothing, furniture and bed linen so these items are less likely to spread head lice.

What are signs of head lice?

- One of the first signs may be itching or scratching
- Crawling head lice are hard to see because they can run quickly (up to 30 cm per minute) and hide from searching hands. Adult lice are usually dark brown and about 2-3 mm long. Hatchlings (young lice) are often a lighter brown and about 1-2 mm long.
- Eggs (nits) are easier to see.
- Nits are firmly attached to the hair close to the scalp.
- Nits are grey-white, oval and are about the size of a grain of salt.
- Nits may look like dandruff but cannot be flicked off.

What do I do if I find head lice?

- Check all family members
 - Treatment is necessary those who have lice and/or nitss. It is important that everyone is treated at the same time.
- Choose one of the treatments on the attached pages
- Inform the school or daycare and all close contacts including friends and relatives
- Once treatment is completed, with all the head lice and eggs removed, check the hair regularly e.g. weekly

How do I look for head lice?

1. Shampoo the hair.
2. Rinse and towel dry.
3. Put a generous amount of inexpensive conditioner to cover the whole scalp.
4. Untangle the hair with a wide tooth comb.
5. Section and comb the hair with a metal fine-tooth nit comb which easily separates the hair. [video](#)
 - a. After each stroke, wipe the comb on a paper towel and look for lice.
 - b. Make sure the hair behind the ears and at the nape of the neck are combed.

Pediculosis**Household Cleaning**

Head lice do not live long away from the scalp and nits are unlikely to hatch at room temperature. Excessive cleaning of personal, school and household items is therefore not necessary. As a precaution, wash bed linen, hats, combs, or brushes in hot water and dry in a hot dryer. Storing items in plastic bags for 10-14 days also kills the lice.

Exclusion from School/Daycare

Students will be excluded from school if live lice are found on their head. They may return to school once treatment has been initiated, and there is no longer evidence of live lice. **The parent must continue treatment until all eggs and hatchlings have been removed.**

'Trouble-shooting' Checklist

If treatment is unsuccessful, check the following:

- Was the insecticide/non-insecticide treatment applied exactly as directed and repeated in 7-10 days?
- Was the hair combed and checked **daily** using plenty of conditioner, and all visible nits removed for 10 days (the hatch cycle of the eggs)?
- Was a good quality metal fine tooth 'nit' comb used?
- Have **all** other household members been checked and treated if necessary?

Prevention Activities/Ideas to Help Prevent Infestation

- **Check your child's hair every week** for head lice and eggs (nits) – use a metal fine tooth nit comb and plenty of hair conditioner to make the task easier and more effective. To help children sit still for this, offer distracting activities, e.g., play a favorite video, provide games, encourage reading, etc.
- **Tie long hair back** – braid and/or put up if possible.
- **Consider applying hair gel or mousse** – these do not prevent or repel lice but help keep stray hair strands from contact with other heads.
- **Avoid sharing combs, brushes, hats, elastics and headbands.**
- **Remind your child to try to avoid head-to-head contact** with other children, e.g., when working at the computer with others, when playing, hugging, group "selfies", or sleep-overs.

Appendix B: Treatment for Head Lice

Insecticides

Insecticides are chemicals that kill insects. In Canada, 2 insecticides are approved to treat head lice:

- pyrethrin (found in R&C shampoo + conditioner)
- permethrin (Nix creme rinse or Kwellada-P creme rinse)

Pyrethrin and permethrin are safe when used on humans over two months old. You do not need a prescription. Over time, head lice have become resistant to some of the chemicals used to kill them. So, some products may be less effective than they used to be. But they are still worth trying.

How to apply insecticides:

- Follow package directions carefully.
- Don't leave the shampoo or rinse in the hair longer than directed.
- Rinse hair with cool water after the treatment. It's best to rinse over a sink, not in the bath or shower, so that other body parts don't come in contact with the product.
- Repeat the treatment after 7 to 10 days, in case new lice hatched from the nits.
- These treatments can sometimes make the scalp itchy or can leave a mild burning feeling. If your child is scratching after treatment, it does not necessarily mean the lice are back.

Non-insecticides

Isopropyl myristate/cyclomethicone (Resultz) is approved for use in Canada, but it should only be used in children 4 years of age and older. It dehydrates the lice and they die.

Apply to a dry scalp and rinse with warm water after 10 minutes.

Repeat after 1 week.

Silicone oil dimeticone (NYDA) is effective against live lice, nymphs and nits. It is not recommended for children under 2 years old. A second treatment is recommended after 8 to 10 days.

Benzyl alcohol lotion 5% (Ulesfia) is effective against live lice but a second treatment is recommended after 9 days.

These products are usually more expensive than insecticides. It is not known for sure whether they work better.

Other treatments

Some people suggest home remedies such as mayonnaise, petroleum jelly, olive oil, vinegar or margarine. Although these products may make it hard for lice to breathe, they probably won't kill them. There is little evidence that wet combing (removing lice by combing wet hair with a fine-tooth comb) works all on its own.

There is no evidence that products such as tea tree oil or aromatherapy work to treat head lice.

Do I need to disinfect the house if someone has head lice?

Because head lice don't live long off the scalp, there is no need for extra cleaning.

However, you do need to get rid of lice or nits from items that touch the head such as hats, pillowcases, combs and brushes:

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Wash items in hot water and dry them in a hot dryer for at least 15 min; or
 Store the items in an airtight plastic bag for 2 weeks. Use a Ziploc-type bag that is airtight. A regular shopping bag often has little holes. 10 Day Hair Conditioner Treatment for Head Lice

Hair Conditioner

Head lice can be more easily removed by applying plenty of hair conditioner to hair before combing to remove live lice and eggs (nits). Any type of hair conditioner may be used, including inexpensive 'generic' brands, together with a metal fine-tooth 'nit' comb such as the LiceMeister® comb.

How does it work?

The hair conditioner works by immobilizing the lice so that it is easier to trap them in the teeth of the comb. Without the hair conditioner to slow them down, lice can be difficult to catch – they can run about 30 cm in 60 seconds. Hair conditioner also reduces friction, making combing easier, especially when using a metal fine-tooth 'nit' comb that the teeth don't bunch together, and the hair separates easily. An example of this type of comb is the LiceMeister® Comb. Even if only one or two lice are missed, they can lay about 6 eggs per day, and the cycle of infestation will continue.

Why the 10-day treatment period?

Generally, eggs 'nits will hatch 7-8 days after being laid on the hair shaft. However, some researchers have found that a few eggs may hatch as late as 9-10 days after being laid. The 10-day period is therefore recommended as the most effective time to break the reproductive cycle of the head lice.

What to do:

- Apply plenty of hair conditioner to the hair until saturated.
- Comb through with an ordinary comb or brush to remove tangles.
- Section and comb the hair thoroughly with a metal fine-tooth 'nit' comb in 4 directions – forwards, backwards, left and right. Use additional conditioner, if the comb tugs the hair or the hair is too dry.
- Wipe the comb on a white paper towel to check that the dark adult lice or the paler hatchlings are being removed. Hatchlings are young lice which emerge from eggs. You may need to use a magnifying glass and a strong light to see the lice and eggs.
- Using white hair conditioner may make it easier to see the head lice.
- Rinse the hair conditioner out and dry the hair.
- Repeat this process every day for 10 days to cover the hatching period of the eggs. This removes the hatchlings which emerge from missed eggs.
- After completion of the 10-day treatment, check for lice reinfestation once a week for at least 4 weeks. Hair conditioner makes the inspection easier.
- Check all other household members for head lice infestation using the method described above.






How to remove eggs:

Some eggs will be removed by combing, but others are harder to detach. You may need to use your fingernails to remove as many eggs as possible from the base of the hair shaft near to the scalp. Remember, only those eggs within 1 cm of the scalp will hatch. Those eggs which have grown further out the hair shaft will already be hatched or dead; however, it is recommended that **all nits** be removed.

Adapted from: Caring for Kids https://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/head_lice

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Appendix C – 21 Day Head Lice Calendar

<p>Nit Picking Tips</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ It is very important to pick nits BY HAND ❖ Nits are easier to see if you use a bright light such as a flashlight ❖ Soak combs, brushes, hair ties in hot water for 10 minutes ❖ Pillow, towels, and other items that touch the child's head should be washed in hot water ❖ Tell your child not to touch heads with others ❖ Coat child's head with conditioner for daily head checks, this makes checking easier! 	<p>Day 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Chose between conditioner or pediculocide treatment and begin treatment today ❑ Check child's whole head and remove nits by hand ❑ Check all other family member's heads and treat if lice or nits are found ❑ Inform the child's school, daycare and other close contacts 	<p>Day 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Check child's whole head and remove nits by hand ❑ Use conditioner with head checks 	<p>Day 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Check child's whole head and remove nits by hand 	<p>Day 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Check child's whole head and remove nits by hand 	<p>Day 5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Check child's whole head and remove nits by hand 	<p>Day 6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Check child's whole head and remove nits by hand 	<p>Day 7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ If treating with pediculocide and nits are still present then re-treat today ❑ Check child's whole head and remove nits by hand
	<p>Day 8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Check child's whole head and remove nits by hand 	<p>Day 9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Check child's whole head and remove nits by hand 	<p>Day 10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Check child's whole head and remove nits by hand 	<p>Day 11</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Check child's whole head and remove nits by hand 	<p>Day 12</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Check child's whole head and remove nits by hand 	<p>Day 13</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Check child's whole head and remove nits by hand 	<p>Day 14</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Check child's whole head and remove nits by hand
<p>Day 15</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Check child's whole head and remove nits by hand 	<p>Day 16</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Check child's whole head and remove nits by hand 	<p>Day 17</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Check child's whole head and remove nits by hand 	<p>Day 18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Check child's whole head and remove nits by hand 	<p>Day 19</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Check child's whole head and remove nits by hand 	<p>Day 20</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Check child's whole head and remove nits by hand 	<p>Day 21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Check child's whole head and remove nits by hand ❑ SUCCESS AT LAST! 