



HEAD LICE

Head lice could happen to anyone, adult or child. It has nothing to do with the economics of a family or the lack of cleanliness. The most common symptom of infestation is intense itching on the back of the head or neck. Head lice survive only on humans. There is little evidence to support that lice carry disease.

Head lice are passed from person to person by direct contact or on shared objects, such as hats, combs, towels, barrettes, headphones, etc. Please encourage your child to keep these things to him or herself. If you do find head lice, don't panic- just follow the steps below to take care of the problem.

If your child is found to have lice, they will not be allowed to return to the classroom and you will be contacted. Your child cannot return to school until treated and checked by the school nurse. It will be at the discretion of the school nurse whether the child may return to class or needs to go home to continue the treatment.

1. **CHECK EVERY MEMBER OF THE FAMILY:**
Lice are hard to spot, so look for tiny white eggs (nits) on hair shafts, near the scalp, especially at the nape of the neck and behind the ears. Head lice are small, wingless, grayish-tan insects. Any family member with lice or nits should be treated.
2. **USE AN EFFECTIVE HEAD LICE TREATMENT:**
Several are available without a prescription. Contact your physician for their recommendation.
3. **REMOVE ALL NITS:**
Gently comb the child's hair with a special nit removal comb. A plastic comb is provided with most lice treatment products. The LiceMeister Comb is highly recommended by those who have used it. It is metal, may be boiled, and is reusable. Danvers Public Schools require students to be nit-free before they can return to school. Continue combing hair daily for the next few weeks looking for lice, nits, or intense itching.
4. **WASH CLOTHES, BED LINENS AND TOWELS:**
Use hot water, then dry on the hot cycle for at least 20 minutes. Items such as stuffed animals, headphones, and hats that are not machine washable must be dry cleaned or stored in a tightly sealed plastic bag for 2 weeks.

5. SOAK COMBS, BRUSHES, ETC. IN HOT WATER: The hotter the better, the temperature should be at least 130 degrees Fahrenheit.
6. VACUUM EVERYWHERE:
To make sure the rest of your home is lice free, you should vacuum carpets, pillows, mattresses, upholstered furniture, even car seats.

Please remember, head lice are a temporary inconvenience. With some effort, you will get through this. There are many websites on the Internet to give you more information. www.headlice.org or www.doit4thekids.org are two that I am aware of from the National Pediculosis Association.

Call the school and notify school nurse if you find head lice. Please do not hesitate to call if you have any questions.