

Millard School District

Head Lice Guidelines

If a case of lice is suspected, the following procedures should be followed.

Identification:

- A trained designee from the school will check the child for head lice and nits.
- A student identified with head lice and / or nits located on the scalp or within ½ inch of the scalp will be removed from the classroom and contact with other students.
- Parents / guardians will be notified and the student sent home to be treated.
- Parents / guardians will be provided with the letter, “Head Lice Found on Child” along with an information article and will be encouraged to follow directions provided for the treatment and removal of lice and nits.
- Parents of the other children in the class will not be notified unless there are multiple cases identified in a particular classroom and in consultation with the school nurse.

Re-admittance:

- A student sent home for lice or nit treatment either during school or after school may return the same day and should return no later than the following school day.
- Parents / guardians will be asked to report the treatment procedures used.
- The returning student will be checked by a trained designee to ensure that lice and nits have been removed.
- A student who continues to have live lice or nits on or within ½ inch of the scalp will be sent home for further treatment and nit removal.

Continued Absence:

- If the student does not return to school by the following day after exclusion, contact will be made by the school to inquire about the reason for continued absence and to offer support to the family.
- If the lice infestation continues and / or the student is not returned to school after contact and supportive efforts are provided, the school nurse and the school administrator will determine the necessity for Child Protective services involvement based upon educational neglect.

Students deemed by the school to have head lice and / or nits should be dealt with in a sensitive manner to avoid undue embarrassment and ridicule.

Millard School District

HEAD LICE

Information Article

Parents, your importance in the control of head lice is crucial in preventing outbreaks in the school setting. Head lice are easily acquired in the community and are usually not identifiable for weeks to months after exposure. Having head lice will not lead to any other disease, nor does it mean your child is dirty. This condition, though troublesome, should not be the basis of irrational or unkind reactions.

You can help by understanding what head lice are, how you get it, how to prevent it, how to detect it, and how to treat it.

- **What are head lice**



Head lice are tiny, wingless, tan/brown insects that live and breed in human hair. They are about the size of a sesame seed. The eggs, called nits, are easier to see than the lice themselves. The nits are yellowish-white, tear drop shaped, and are firmly attached, at an angle to the hair shaft close to the scalp behind the ears and on the back of the neck. Dandruff, lint, and hair spray globules can easily be brushed from hair and can be mistaken for nits. Unlike dandruff, nits are difficult to remove and cannot be brushed away. Lice crawl slowly and cannot crawl long distances. **They do not fly, hop, or jump.** They survive by piercing the skin to feed on blood. Skin irritation at the feeding site causes itching. While head lice is a nuisance it does not pose a significant health hazard and they are not known to spread disease.

- **How do lice spread**

Lice are primarily spread by direct hair-to-hair contact, and less frequently through shared items such as combs, brushes, scarves, hats, headphones, sleeping bags, and stuffed animals. Lice may also be transmitted through shared bedding such as pillows, pillowcases, sheets, and blankets. Lice cannot survive away from the head for more than 24-48 hours. However, the nits can survive off the body for a week or more but in order to survive they must get back on the head soon after they hatch. You cannot catch head lice from or give them to pets.

- **How do you prevent head lice**



- Teach children not to share combs, brushes, hats, and coats.
- Do not try on other people's hats (not even in department stores).
- Teach children to hang coats separately – placing hats and scarves inside of coat. Check your child's hair if he/she frequently scratches their head or complains about itching.
- Getting rid of lice as soon as they are found can prevent them from spreading in your home.

- **How are lice detected**

The first clue that a child has head lice is frequent scratching of the scalp. To check for infestation, carefully examine the hair around the back of the neck and behind the ears. Since head lice shy away from light, you may only see the eggs (nits), small whitish ovals of uniform size (teardrop shape) attached to the hair shaft.



- **How are lice treated**

Successful treatment needs to concentrate on removing/killing lice on the child and on the removal of the nits.



Several products are available to treat head lice. These are either shampoos or cream rinses. Some can be purchased over-the-counter while others need a prescription. These medicated shampoos and rinses should not be used on infants because the medicine is absorbed through the skin and can affect the brain.

It is important to follow the instructions on the medicine exactly. Many of the treatments must be applied to dry hair to be effective. After the initial treatment, comb or pick out all the nits with a fine tooth nit comb. Combing should be repeated daily until no lice or nits are seen. A second treatment is recommended 7-10 days after the initial treatment. Only those family members with lice or nits should be treated.



Do not use a cream rinse, combination shampoo/conditioner, or conditioner before using lice medicine. Do not re-wash the hair for 1-2 days after the lice medicine is removed.

- **How to Treat the Environment**

In addition to treating those with lice, the home also needs to be addressed by:



- Checking everyone in the household at the same time, prior to cleaning the environment.
- Washing clothing and bed linens in hot water. Items should be washed for at least 10 minutes at a water temperature of 130-140°F. Dry items on high heat for at least 30 minutes.
- Vacuuming your upholstered furniture, carpet, floors, stuffed animals, coat collars, hats, bare mattresses, car upholstery and child car seats. Soaking your combs, brushes, and hair accessories in boiling water for 10 minutes. If items cannot be exposed to heat, soak them in Lysol, rubbing alcohol or a pediculicide for one hour.
- Items that cannot be washed or vacuumed, such as stuffed animals, can be placed in a tightly closed plastic bag for 14 days at room temperature or 24 hours in below freezing temperatures.
- All of the above tasks should be completed on the same day for increased success in eliminating head lice.

Spraying or fogging a home with insecticides or pediculicides is NOT RECOMMENDED, and may be harmful if used in a poorly ventilated area.

Millard School District
HEAD LICE FOUND ON CHILD

Date

Dear Parent or Guardian of _____

Head lice or recently laid nits (eggs) have been found on your child's head. Head lice have nothing to do with the cleanliness of a house or parenting skills. Head lice are spread by hair-to-hair contact, although sharing hats, combs, and other hair accessories may also spread head lice. Head lice cannot jump or fly. Head lice crawl and are not a risk to pets.

It is important to treat your child before he/she returns to school. Please begin treatment as soon as possible. Your child should be back to school the following day so that they do not miss learning opportunities in the classroom. Also, remember to check everyone in the household and treat anyone that has live head lice and/or nits. Continuous checking maybe required up to 3 weeks to avoid re-infestation.

How to Treat Head Lice

Head lice may be treated with shampoos intended for the treatment of head lice. Use lice shampoo exactly as directed on the label. Many of these shampoos are insecticides and should be used with caution, especially on children and by pregnant or nursing women. If your child has asthma please consult with his/her health care provider. It is important that you read and follow the shampoo directions as some require application on wet hair and some require application on dry hair. In addition, some lice shampoos require a second shampooing 10 days later to kill lice that may have hatched after the initial treatment. **Do not over treat.** In some cases the over-the-counter products fail to kill the live lice. If this occurs please contact your health care provider, as they may be able to order a prescription medication for treatment of head lice.

Removal of Head Lice and Nits

Effective treatment of head lice requires the removal of both lice and eggs from the hair. Lice shampoos do not remove eggs from the hair. The eggs must be combed out or manually removed from the hair. Sit behind your child in a room with good lighting to comb through the hair, one section at a time. Use a fine-toothed nit comb. These combs are sold at most stores or may be included in packages of the lice shampoo. Combs with metal teeth spaced close together work best. Your child's hair should be clean, wet, well combed or brushed to remove tangles before using the louse comb. A conditioner may be used to lubricate the hair. Divide hair into small sections. Comb through each section until no more lice or eggs are found. Clean the comb with a paper towel to remove any eggs or lice. You should continue checking and removing any lice or eggs for a period of 3 weeks.

Treating the Environment

In addition to treating those with lice, the home also needs to be addressed. All items your child has been in contact with in the past two days such as towels, pillowcases, sheets, pajamas, clothes, coats, hats, and similar items should be washed in water temperature of 130°-140°F and dried on high heat for at least 30 minutes. Items that cannot be washed or vacuumed, such as stuffed animals, can be placed in a tightly closed plastic bag for 14 days at room temperature or 24 hours in below freezing temperatures. Lice in the environment (not on the head) usually die within a day and the eggs generally cannot live much longer.

Vacuum the house, mattresses, furniture, car upholstery, and child car seats. Using household insecticides to treat the home, vehicles, carpets or furniture **is not recommended** and may unnecessarily expose your household to harmful chemicals.

Sincerely,

MILLARD SCHOOL DISTRICT
SEVERAL CASES OF LICE FOUND IN THE SCHOOL

Dear Parent/Guardian:

A case of head lice has been found in your child's class. The parents of all students in the class are being notified via this letter.

This is not cause for panic.
It is cause for action to be taken to prevent head lice.
Treat/remove any head lice or nits found on your child's head.

It is extremely important for you to check your child's head TODAY. Keep checking every 2 days for 10 days to make sure no head lice are found.

The best way to prevent transmission:

- ⇒ Teach children not to share combs, brushes, hair ornaments, hats, scarves, headsets, or any other personal headgear.
- ⇒ Do not try on other people's hats (even at department stores).
- ⇒ Teach children to hang coats separately- placing hats and scarves inside coat/jacket sleeves.
- ⇒ Conduct regular checks of your child.

If head lice/nits are found on your child:

- ⇒ Check others in the household for signs of head lice or nits. If found, complete remaining steps on all infested individuals.
- ⇒ Use an effective head lice treatment.
- ⇒ Remove nits from the head by combing. This is the most important lice control measure. Complete nit removal is time consuming but is critical for successful treatment.
- ⇒ Remove all of the lice and nits from the environment by washing or vacuuming. There is no need to spray pesticides at home as they may unnecessarily expose your household to harmful chemicals.
- ⇒ Perform daily head checks and remove nits for 3 weeks until head lice are gone. Continue to check your child weekly to detect re-infestation.

If you have difficulty getting rid of the head lice on your child, please contact your child's health care provider.

Sincerely,

Millard School District
PARENT/GUARDIAN EDUCATION

Dear Parents/Guardians

We are sending this letter to all parents to increase head lice awareness so that you may take steps at home to help prevent your child from becoming infested with head lice. Any time children come together, particularly at the start of the school year, or any social grouping, head lice cases commonly increase. Please encourage your child not to share or trade personal items such as hats, combs, brushes, headbands, clips, as well as helmets or headphones with foam protectors.

Direct, physical, hair-to-hair contact is the usual method of transmission. Lice do not jump, fly or swim. They are, however, good crawlers. Check your child's head weekly for lice and/or nits (eggs). Mature lice, which are the size of a sesame seed, avoid light and are hard to see. Lice eggs or "nits" are usually found close to the scalp-usually within ¼ inch. The nits are yellowish-white, tear drop shaped, and are firmly attached at an angle to the hair shaft close to the scalp behind the ears and on the back of the neck. They cannot easily be flicked away as dandruff can. Head lice do not transmit disease and are not a serious medical condition. They cannot survive on pets. If you find head lice on your child keep him or her home until properly treated. This should be no longer than 24 hours. Continue to examine all family members for 3 weeks and treat if live lice or nits close to the scalp are found.

Check Regularly – Treat Quickly
KEEP HEAD LICE OFF YOUR CHILD

For more information regarding head lice please feel free to contact the school office or your local Health Department.

Sincerely,