



## Head Lice (Pediculosis Capitis)

Health Services  
Mat-Su Borough School District  
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Date \_\_\_\_\_

### HEAD LICE (PEDICULOSIS CAPITIS)

Dear Parent of \_\_\_\_\_,

In a screening examination at school today, your child was found to have head lice. Our district policy BP 5141.22 states: "If live lice are found in the hair, the parent will be notified to use over-the-counter treatment, via phone, email, and/or a note sent home with the student. The next day, an examination of the student will take place by the school nurse or designee. The student may remain at school if there is no presence of live lice. If there are nits present, the student may remain in school. Presence of nits does not indicate active infestation." If live lice are found again in the hair, the student will not be allowed back into school until they are gone.

Head lice are wingless insects and cannot jump or fly. They move by crawling, and are mostly spread by direct head-to-head contact, for example, during close play at home or school, slumber parties, sports activities or camp. It is also possible, but not common, to spread head lice by contact with clothing, such as hats, scarves, coats or other personal items, such as combs, brushes or towels. Head lice do not carry any diseases nor does their presence mean uncleanness. Unfortunately, head lice are very common, especially among school age children. Children found to have active infestation of live lice will be sent home at the end of the school day and are not to return to school until they have been treated for head lice infestation and checked by the school nurse or designee to be clear of live lice. Talk to your health care provider or school nurse for recommendations of head lice treatments.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

There are several brands of treatments specifically made for head lice. Most do not require a prescription. Some brands seem to be more effective than others in killing lice and nits (eggs). Nits and live lice not killed by the first application of treatment may cause re-infestation. It is important that you read and follow all package directions precisely when using these products. Unfortunately, head lice have become resistant to many treatments. Careful combing and physical removal of lice and nits are very important to avoiding spread and re-infestation. Daily inspection of your child's head after treatment is important for 2-3 weeks following treatment. All household members and other close contacts should be checked, and those with evidence of an active infestation should also be treated at the same time.

We DO NOT recommend the purchase or use of sprays for furniture or carpeting. Using a vacuum and carefully vacuuming the carpeting, furniture, and around /under the beds should be sufficient. In addition, it is most important that you launder bed linens and clothing including hats, coats, etc. Items that cannot be laundered (such as stuffed animals, down coats or comforters) can be placed in a plastic trash bag and stored in the garage or outside for 2 weeks. Lice must have blood to live, so separation from humans will kill them. For those items that can be laundered, it is best to use hot soapy water and a hot dryer if the item can safely be laundered in hot temperatures.

Combs and hair brushes should be cleaned in hot soapy water and left to soak overnight. Other hair items such as barrettes, bows and ponytail holders should be laundered, soaked or bagged for 2 weeks. Vacuum out drawers where these items are kept.

Remember... head lice are common and can be very frustrating. By working together we hope to minimize further spread.

Please call if you have questions.

\_\_\_\_\_  
School Nurse

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone number