

Pediculosis (Head Lice)

The school nurse supports and develops appropriate and consistent policies and procedures regarding pediculosis (head lice) and the school-age child.

Responsibilities of the school nurse are as follows:

1. To screen symptomatic student(s) and refer to parent for treatment.
2. To minimize school absence.
3. To educate parent and school community.
4. To advocate for prevention of overexposure to potentially hazardous chemicals.

Responsibilities of the parent/student are as follows:

1. To provide timely and appropriate treatment to rid student's head of lice.
2. To provide ongoing surveillance of student and other household contacts, and treat appropriately.
3. To communicate with the school nurse regarding treatment measures taken.

The protocol for responding to cases of pediculosis is as follows:

1. The school nurse will screen for pediculosis if child complains of his/her head itching or is noted to be scratching head excessively.
2. If upon examination, no live lice or nits (eggs) are found, student returns to class.
3. If nits are present but no live lice are evident, the parent will be contacted to inquire about recent treatment if it occurred, and to recommend the removal of nits. The student will return to class.
4. If live lice are present, the parent/guardian will be contacted, and it will be recommended that the student be sent home as soon as possible (and no later than the end of the school day, in accordance with state law) for treatment.
5. Treatment should commence promptly to minimize school absence.
6. The school nurse will determine if the student has been treated adequately and may attend classes upon return to school after treatment.

The following responses are considered **unjustified**:

1. Notification of classmate's parents.
2. Mass screenings.
3. Insecticide treatments to school environment.