

Williamson County Schools

Head Lice Information

Having head lice can happen to anyone. It is not a sign of having poor health habits or being dirty. The most important fact to remember is that the problem should be quickly treated because delays will only help spread the head lice throughout your family and community. Please check your child regularly.

Signs of head lice and nits (lice eggs):

- Head scratching and intense itching of the scalp and neck with the observation of tiny crawling insects about the size of a sesame seed, with six legs, and color of tan to grayish-white.
- Adult head lice may look darker in persons with dark hair than in persons with light hair.
- Nits are lice eggs laid by the adult female head louse at the base of the hair shaft nearest the scalp. Nits are firmly attached to the hair shaft and are oval-shaped and very small (about the size of a knot in thread) and hard to see.
- Nits often appear yellow or white and easily confused with dandruff. Dandruff is removed easily from the hair or scalp; however, nits (eggs) are glued to the hair shaft and are very difficult to remove-usually must be pulled all the way to the end of the hair shaft by your fingers or with a fine-toothed comb.

Treatment of head lice:

- There are several non-prescription and prescription treatments available to eliminate lice and their eggs. They can be purchased at your local pharmacy, or call your physician for his/her recommendation. Read and follow the directions carefully.
- A second treatment is often recommended 10 days later. A fine-toothed comb is often needed to remove all of the nits.
- Please spend time with your child combing all of the nits (eggs) out of his/her hair.
- Put on clean clothing after treatment.
- Inspect all other family members for head lice and recheck periodically over the next two (2) weeks.

If head lice is found:

- Clean all articles that might have lice or nits. Clothes, towels, and bed linens should be washed in hot water and detergent or dry-cleaned. Continue to wash your child's bed linens regularly and vacuum all upholstered furniture and carpet. Throw vacuum bags away after each use. Wash all book bags and back packs.
- Stuffed animals or items that cannot be washed or dry-cleaned should be sealed in a plastic bag for at least ten days to two weeks.
- Disinfect combs, brushes, and similar items by washing with the special shampoo.

Returning to school:

- A student may return to school only after the hair has been treated appropriately and the parent presents to the Principal or school nurse proof of treatment, a release from a health care provider, or after satisfactory examination by the school nurse.
- Your child will be checked periodically over the next several weeks to ensure that the treatment(s) were effective.

Confidentiality and sensitivity to you and your child is of paramount importance to us as we work together in the elimination of this condition. Thank you for your cooperation in being proactive to manage this problem that can lead to a disruption in your child's learning at school.