



FACTS FOR FAMILIES...ABOUT HEAD LICE

Please let us know if you think your child may have head lice; our school nurses are happy to help!

GENERAL INFORMATION:

- Head lice (pediculosis capitus) are parasites – they live on the human scalp
- Lice can only thrive on human blood. and head lice get their blood supply from the human scalp
- Lice cannot jump or fly; they travel by crawling, but cannot crawl long distances
- Lice lay eggs, called “nits” on the hair shaft
- Eggs are laid close to the scalp and are grayish and transparent
- Lice are **ONLY** passed person to person through direct contact and sharing of personal items such as combs, brushes, hats, pillows, or other items that have regular contact with the head-most often from a sleep-over situation
- Lice cannot be transmitted by animals, grass, or soil
- Lice cannot live more than 24 hours away from their blood source
- Anyone can get head lice; it does not mean a person has poor hygiene

LIFE CYCLE OF HEAD LICE:

- Lice spend only 5 days as adults
- Adult female lays 5-10 eggs (nits) per day
- Nits hatch into “nymphs” after 10 days
- Nymphs live for 20-25 days on the scalp
- By the time lice are detected, they may have been present for 30 days already

PREVENTION:

- Children should not share personal items that touch the head with each other
- Avoid close head-to-head contact

TREATMENT:

- There are several treatments for head lice, both prescription and non-prescription. We recommend you see your doctor for diagnosis and treatment recommendations.
- Successful removal of nits closest to the scalp with a lice comb is very important.
- The clothes washer and dryer can be your best friends – using hot water to wash clothing and bed linens and then drying in a temperature of 100 degrees or greater kills all lice; most dryers today are hotter than this on the hot setting.
- Recurrent, chronic cases of head lice may require prescription-strength treatment, but most one-time cases are treatable with a non-toxic product our school nurses can provide to you.

Crawfordsville Community Schools follow recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control, American Academy of Pediatrics, National Association of School Nurses regarding the management of head lice in the school setting.