



# HAUPPAUGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## PINES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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*Principal*

Transmission of head lice in schools occurs as children work and play together. Young children trade hats, share combs and enjoy close contact with each other. Contrary to popular belief, lice do not prefer dirty heads. Lice feed on clean, warm scalps and millions of school age children will be their hosts this year.

Head lice has been a public health problem since the beginning of time. Infection of humans by lice has been documented for thousands of years. What this means is that lice are very tenacious little creatures. With your cooperation, we will be able to bring this situation under control quickly if you will adhere to the following procedures:

### STEPS TO PREVENTION

- A. Head inspections should be done daily of all family members.
- B. Your child should change clothing everyday.
- C. Daily bathing in warm water and frequent shampooing.
- D. Do not share combs, brushes, towels etc. in the home.
- E. Caution children not to use borrowed combs, brushes, hats or hair accessories.
- F. All bedding and clothing should be washed frequently.

For more information you can refer to :

"Kids Health" ([www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org))

Fairy Tales Hair Care Products ([www.fairytalehaircare.com](http://www.fairytalehaircare.com))

[www.headlice.org](http://www.headlice.org)

Whenever a case is detected, the parents will be notified, and it will be necessary to send the student home. If your child becomes infested with lice, it is important that you act immediately. The key to successful treatment requires time and effort. Delousing your child and house will take several hours and a very watchful eye. The following instructions will help you.

### STEPS TO LICE ELIMINATION

Contact your family physician for his/her advice regarding treatment.

#### **Step 1 – Kill the Lice**

Treatment begins by shampooing the child's hair with a product designed to kill the lice and nits (eggs). Both prescription and the over-the counter remedies are available in a number of formulations (shampoo, creme rinse, gel, etc.) Parents must realize that these preparations are pesticides rather than hair care products. Also, head lice do not live on pets so do not treat your pets. The active ingredient in each product is an insecticide which kills by damaging the louse's nervous system. However, because newly laid eggs have no central nervous system for about four days, they are not affected by killing agents during this time. No preparation is 100% effective and few have a dependable residual effect. Therefore, a repeat treatment after 7-10 days is usually needed. Nit removal is a critical step in the lice control process regardless of the pediculicide used.

#### **Step 2 – Remove the Nits**

The second step is nit removal, a critical element in the complete control of head lice. Nits can be difficult to remove because they are quite literally cemented to the hair shaft by a glue-like substance produced by the female louse. Using a lice egg remover after shampooing with a pediculicide is an effective aid to help loosen

the nits so they can be more easily combed out. If all nits are not removed it is difficult to tell whether new nits have been laid and the individual has been re-infested. Parents need to monitor the child's head daily for some time to make certain a re-infestation does not occur. Only with complete nit removal can a re-infestation be quickly detected. Without nit removal, the new infestation can occur before being discovered. It is much easier to treat an early infestation.

### **10 TIPS FOR MANUAL REMOVAL**

1. Work under a good light, such as a natural sunlight from sitting by a window or going outdoors. A strong lamp can also be used. If eyesight is a problem, have a magnifying glass on hand.
2. Use a grooming comb or hair brush to remove tangles.
3. Divide the hair in sections and fasten off the hair that is not being worked on at this time.
4. Using a nit removal comb, go through the section from the scalp to the end of the hair. Dip the comb into a cup of water or use a paper towel to remove any lice, nits, or debris from the comb between passings. (If debris builds up, use an old toothbrush to clean the comb.)
5. Sift through that same section of hair and look for attached nits (lice eggs). They are always oval-shaped, usually grayish-white although they can vary in color. Nits are generally laid close to the scalp but can be found anywhere on the hair shaft.
6. If the lice comb does not remove the nits, then use your fingernails or safety scissor to snip the individual hair strands with attached nits.
7. Go on to the next hair section until all sections have been completed.
8. After screening and nit removal has been completed, team up on the head to search for live lice. They move quickly and can be caught by tweezers, your fingernails or "stick them" with double-sided scotch tape.
9. Even under the best of conditions, a few nits may be missed. Check the infested person every day for three weeks and regularly thereafter. Seeing a nit or two the next day does not necessarily mean re-infestation. Being consistent and diligent about manual removal will help.
10. If additional nits are discovered, this signals that live lice may still be on the head. Another thorough manual search is recommended at that time. Go back to Step 1.

### **Step 3 – Clean Up The Environment**

The lice management process doesn't end with removing the nits. The third and final step in the all-important 3-step process for successful control includes an environmental clean-up. Carpets and upholstered furniture (including car interiors and car seats) should be vacuumed. Vacuum bags should be discarded when done. The National Pediculosis Association (NPA) does not recommend environmental sprays, which may create more hazards than lice. Combs, brushes, barrettes, hats, etc. should be soaked in very hot water (150 F) for at least 15 minutes or discarded. Stuffed animals and other items that can't be washed (including bike/sports helmets and headsets with foam ear pieces) should be sealed in plastic bags and stored in a garage or porch for two weeks. Mattresses not covered in plastic should be steam ironed and box springs vacuumed.

The school nurse will examine your child upon returning to school. Home and school cooperation is important. If you have any questions please call the school nurse at 543-8703.

Sincerely,

*Claudine DiMuzio*

Claudine DiMuzio  
Principal

*Marianne Lieberman*

Marianne Lieberman, RN  
Nurse