

Parent Bulletin for Controlling Head Lice

Who is most often affected by head lice?

Elementary school-aged children are most often affected by head lice; zero to 5% may be affected at any one time.

What are head lice?

The head louse is a wingless, parasitic insect that lives on the human scalp, drawing minute amounts of blood to survive. They cannot fly, leap or crawl from person to person. They are ONLY transmitted by DIRECT, PROLONGED HEAD-TO-HEAD CONTACT. They are not transmitted by pets or sandboxes. Diagnosis is confirmed by the presence of a LIVE, MOVING louse, not by the presence of nits (egg cases) deposited on the hair shafts.

Where are head lice commonly found?

Head lice are a "nuisance" condition. The head lice are most often seen first around the ears and the nape of the neck. The affected child may or may not experience itching at the beginning of the infestation. Head lice do not carry any disease. There may be secondary scalp infections due to intense scratching of the scalp that exposes it to bacterial infections.

How can you limit your family's exposure to head lice?

Assist or supervise (depending on your child's age) your child's bathing and shampooing. Check your child's hair and scalp thoroughly once a week.

What are the signs and symptoms of head lice infestation?

Tickling feeling of something moving in the hair; Itching, caused by an allergic reaction to the bites of the head louse; Irritability and difficulty sleeping; head lice are most active in the dark; sores on the head caused by scratching.

What if my child has head lice?

If a live, moving louse is detected, contact your physician, our CUSD Sierra Vista Children's Health Center (327-7976), or consult a pharmacist. Your child is excluded from school until treated and all lice are removed. Students are expected to return to school in one day. The object is to kill or remove all the live lice. Notify the School Nurse so that the situation may be monitored and the effectiveness of treatment can be confirmed. Your child must be checked by trained school personnel before returning to class. When treatment is complete we request that an adult accompany the child to school for the recheck of his/her hair. We appreciate your attention and cooperation in this matter.