

Haverhill Public Schools Head Lice Directions

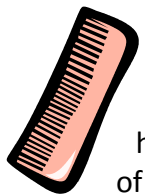
Don't panic. Anyone can get head lice, adults or children. Head lice are most often passed from person-to-person by direct contact and sometimes from shared items, such as combs, clothing, towels, or helmets. It does not mean your child is dirty, and you should not be embarrassed. The problem is easily managed by following the instructions below:



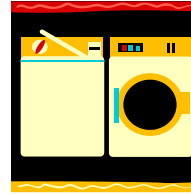
Inspect all family members. Look for tiny white eggs, called nits, attached to the hair shafts, near the scalp (especially behind the ears and at the nape of the neck). A magnifying glass and good lighting will help. Adult head lice are grayish-tan wingless insects that can only crawl, not fly. All family members with nits or lice should be treated.



Use an effective lice treatment. Haverhill Public Schools recommends **Nix cream rinse**, available over the counter. The cream rinse is applied to damp hair, down to the scalp, and rinsed off (in the sink) 10 minutes later. The medicine kills the lice and nits, preventing further spread. You should no longer see live adult head lice after the treatment, but some nits may remain attached to the hair. If the cost of Nix is a problem for you, please talk to the school nurse about possible options.



Comb out and remove all nits. The nits are glued to the hair, and it takes regular combing over several days to remove them all. **Wet Combing Method**, apply regular hair conditioner to wet hair and carefully comb each strand of hair, starting at the scalp, removing as many nits as you can. Do this every day, until the nits are gone (usually 2 weeks)



Clean items that have recently been in contact with the infested person's head. Head lice cannot survive longer than 2 days, once they are off a person's scalp. Wash clothes, pillowcases and towels and dry on hot cycle for at least 20 minutes. Soak combs, brushes, and other hair products in hot (> 130°F) water for 20 minutes.



Vacuum anywhere the infested person's head may have contacted: carpets, upholstered furniture and car seats. Non-washable items like headphones, helmets and toys should be placed in sealed plastic bags for two weeks. This prevents eggs from hatching into live lice.



While a student may be dismissed from school with live head lice, students will be allowed to attend school, even if nits are still present. Nits cannot spread to others, and it is important not to miss class time unnecessarily.



The school nurse and your child's primary care provider are knowledgeable about head lice, so call with questions, especially if you're unsure. Head lice exist throughout the community, not just in schools. The school nurse is willing to examine your child to make sure the treatment is effective. Working together we can help to prevent the spread of head lice in schools.