

A few cases of head lice have been reported at Lisbon this school year, specifically in the Kindergarten, 2nd and 3rd grades. We know that lice can be very challenging to detect and eliminate. We wanted to share information that may be helpful in this process.

Head lice do not carry any disease, and having head lice **does not** mean that the child has poor hygiene. Head lice are spread by head-to-head contact and the sharing of combs, brushes, hair ornaments, hats, etc. Head lice cannot jump or fly, but they can crawl. To prevent spread in the school, children may not return to school until the condition has been treated. Signs of head lice may include:

- itching of the scalp, head, back of the neck, or behind the ears
- frequent scratching of the scalp
- nits (eggs), if present, will be tightly attached to the hair shaft near the scalp
- live lice are rarely seen. They are tiny, wingless, brownish or grayish insects.

Please check your child periodically for these symptoms and for the presence of nits or lice. If found, please treat your child with a pediculocide (which can be found at any pharmacy and is available over the counter). Please notify the Health Room if your child is treated for head lice.

Health Department Directions For Lice Treatment:

Check **all family members** for head lice and lice eggs (nits). Do not treat children under the age of two or pregnant women with head lice treatment products without consulting with your doctor first. Treat all other family members who have head lice at the **same** time. **Do not** treat those who do not have head lice. **Do not** use head lice treatment products to “prevent” head lice. **Do not** use products more often than is recommended on the package. If you have any questions regarding treatment, you can call the School Nurse, Health Assistant or the Health Department.

We do not want children to have unnecessary absences from school due to secondary head lice. Children being treated may return when you supply one of the following:

- A note from your child’s doctor stating that your child does not have head lice or proof of prescription strength shampoo use.
- A note from you stating that you have used an over the counter head lice product/medicated shampoo along with the box or label from the product used.
- A note from you stating that you have used an alternate treatment method and have **completely removed all nits**.

To prevent reinfestation, it is very important to **remove all nits** from the hair. Nits are tiny, white or gray teardrop-shaped eggs, and firmly attached to the hair shaft. Please check all family members every 2 – 3 days for one month to check for new nits. Eggs (nits) are laid very close to the scalp and may be very difficult to see. Use a bright light and a magnifying glass and look close to the scalp and down the hair shaft. The nits move away from the scalp as the hair grows out.

If you have notified the school that your child has been treated for head lice, your child will be rechecked by the school health assistant or school nurse upon return to school and in 7 – 10 days. If there is evidence of continued head lice, your child will be sent home for re-treatment, PLEASE NOTE THAT MANY PRODUCTS REQUIRE A SECOND TREATMENT IN 7-10 DAYS.

Further information about lice, including prevention and control as well as treatment from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) can be found by visiting:
<http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/index.html>

Sincerely,
Michael Caldwell
Principal