

Treatment and Prevention Information

Contact your health provider **before** treatment if the person with head lice:

- is pregnant or breast feeding;
- is under the age of two;
- has allergies, asthma or other medical conditions; or
- has received treatment following package instructions without success.



Prevention

It is rare to transmit lice other than by direct head-to-head contact; however, we advise that you avoid sharing clothing, headbands, hats, towels, pillows, combs/brushes, scarves, hair ornaments, linens and stuffed toys.

Persistent head lice

If head lice persist despite following all of the recommendations, visit with the school nurse or your physician to discuss treatment options.

Blue Valley Head Lice Attendance Procedure

In an effort to minimize absences due to head lice, while preventing the spread of lice, Blue Valley has adopted the following procedures:

- If a student has an active case of head lice (which is defined as having live lice or nits within one-quarter inch of the scalp), the parent or guardian will be notified. After proper treatment with an anti-parasitic shampoo, the student may return to school, reporting first to the nurse's office.
- The nurse will perform a head check and if the student no longer has an active case of head lice, he/she can return immediately.
- If the student continues to display an active case, the student must return home for additional treatment.

If you have additional questions, please contact your child's school nurse.



A Guide to Head Lice Treatment and Prevention



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About Head Lice

What are head lice?

Head lice are tiny, crawling insects the size of a sesame seed that live only on human heads. They depend on human blood for survival. Head lice cannot fly or jump, but can crawl quickly for short distances. They lay eggs, called nits, which glue firmly to the hair shaft. Nits are the size of the eye of a needle, oval shaped and vary from light gray to dark brown in color. Nits may be found anywhere on hair, but usually are found close to the scalp, often behind the ears and at the nape of the neck.

Symptoms of head lice

- Itching of the head and scalp
- Scratch marks (may look like a rash)

What is the life cycle of lice?

The typical louse will live on a person's head for up to 30 days and needs to feed on human blood several times a day. Without blood meals, the louse will die within one to two days off the host. Head lice are spread by direct head-to-head contact with an affected person.

Four-step Treatment Process

Step 1: Notification

Call your child's school nurse and people who have recently been in close contact with your child. Check everyone in your home for head lice and nits.



Step 2: Hair treatment

There are a variety of pediculocides (lice treatment shampoos) that meet the Kansas law requirement for treatment. Examples include: Rid®, A-200®, Pronto® or Nix®.

- Treat persons with live lice or nits within one-quarter inch or less of the scalp on the same day.
- Follow product directions carefully.
- Read package instructions carefully to know if and when to retreat to kill any hatching lice before they can produce new eggs.
- Do not use lice products more frequently than recommended to avoid health risk.

Off label treatment of lice with products such as kerosene, gasoline or animal pesticides pose a great risk to a child's health and should not be used.

Step 3: Nit removal

- Use hair clips for separating hair into one-inch sections.
- Use a good nit comb (typically comes with the lice treatment shampoo).
- Pass the comb from the scalp to the ends of the hair. Comb each section until completely free of lice and nits.

- Look closely for nits and live lice on the comb itself, removing lice or nits as you go.
- Have the treated person put on clean clothing after treatment.
- Frequent rechecks and removal of any nits missed in the initial treatment may decrease the risk of a reemergence of lice. Continue to check for two to three weeks to be sure all lice and nits are gone.
- After each use, soak nit combs in very hot water (130 degrees F) or a solution of lice treatment shampoo for 15 minutes. Wash hands and clean under nails.

Step 4: Household cleaning

Lice rarely leave the human head for household articles and do not survive long (two days) if they fall off and cannot feed (CDC.gov). However, some household cleaning is recommended to help prevent the return of lice.

- Cleaning is best done the same day as hair treatment.
- Launder bed linens, clothing and towels used in the last two days using hot water (130 degrees F) and the high heat dryer setting for at least 20 minutes.
- Items that cannot be laundered should be placed in a plastic bag and stored for two weeks.
- Soak combs and brushes in hot water (130 degrees F) for 5-10 minutes.
- Vacuuming furniture and floors where the person sat/lay can remove hair that might have nits attached.
- There is no need to clean areas or items that were not used by family members with active head lice. Use of insecticidal sprays is not advised and can be harmful if inhaled or absorbed through the skin.