

# Information

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Kansas regulations do not require individuals with head lice or nits to be excluded from school or child care. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the National Association of School Nurses advocate that children should not be excluded for lice or nits. Head lice can be a nuisance, but they have not been shown to spread disease and are not considered a public health hazard. CDC states that the burden of unnecessary absenteeism to the students, families and communities far outweighs the perceived risks associated with head lice.

Spring Hill Schools do not exclude students with lice, but we strongly recommend that parents keep the students at home until a full treatment can be completed. Absences due to lice will be excused and the school will provide school work as appropriate. When a student in a school has lice, parents in the school will be notified in order to allow them to check their student. Notifications will be posted on the Nurse's Page (school website) as long as there is an active infestation in the building. Like any other health issue, it is not possible to prevent all exposure in a public-school setting. We appreciate the assistance of all families in this matter.

## Procedure:

- When a student is suspected to have a live lice infestation, the student will be sent to the nurse to be checked.
- If live lice are found, the student's parents will be called and asked to pick up the student and have the student treated. All parents will be notified (via school website) so they may check their student, if desired.
- Spring Hill Schools do not exclude students with lice, but we strongly recommend that parents keep the student at home until a full treatment can be completed.



Spring Hill  
SCHOOL DISTRICT

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# A Guide to Head Lice Treatment and Prevention

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## Head Lice Information

### 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 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 pediculicides (lice treatment shampoos) that meet the Kansas law requirement for treatment. Examples include: Rid®, A-200®, Pronto® or Nix®. 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.

- 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.

### 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 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.