

CONTOOCOOK VALLEY REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

184 Hancock Road, Peterborough, NH 03458

☎ (603) 924-3869

🌐 cvhs.convalsd.net

G. Bruce West, Principal

Kim Chandler, Director of School Counseling

John Reitnauer, ATC Director

Stephen Bartsch, Dean of Students

Amy Clausen-Gilmet, Special Education Administrator

Mark Swasey, Athletic Director

September 18, 2017

Dear ConVal parents and guardians,

Please read the attached documents which contain important educational information regarding head lice.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Health Office with any questions or concerns.

Thank you and have a wonderful week ahead!

Judi Bernardi, RN and Gretchen Shippee, RN

September 15, 2017

Re: Head Lice Education

Dear Parent or Guardian:

As you may know, head lice cases have been on the rise. An estimated 6 to 12 million infestations occur each year in the United States, most commonly among children ages 3 to 11. I am writing to you to help you learn how to identify lice and provide information on what you can do if lice hit your home.

What are head lice?

Head lice are tiny, wingless insects that live close to the human scalp. They feed on blood. The eggs, also called nits, are tiny, tear-drop shaped eggs that attach to the hair shaft. Nits often appear yellowish or white and can look like dandruff but cannot be removed or brushed off. The nymph, or baby louse, is smaller and grows to adult size in one to two weeks. The adult louse is the size of a sesame seed and appears tan to grayish-white. An itchy and inflamed scalp is a common symptom of lice. Although not common, persistent scratching may lead to skin irritation and even infection.

Who is affected by head lice?

Head lice are not related to cleanliness. In fact, head lice often infest people with good hygiene and grooming habits. Infestations can occur at home, school or in the community. Head lice are mostly spread by direct head-to-head contact—for example, during play at home or school, slumber parties, sports activities or camp. Less often, lice are spread via objects that have been in recent contact with a person with head lice, such as hats, scarves, hair ribbons, combs, brushes, stuffed animals or bedding.

What to do if an infestation occurs?

If you think your child has head lice, it's important to talk to your healthcare provider to discuss the best treatment approach for your family. Resistance to some over-the-counter head lice treatments has been reported, but the prevalence of resistance is not known. There are new prescription treatment options available that are safe and do not require nit combing. It is important for you to check your child frequently after treatment. It may take more than one treatment over several weeks to completely eliminate any nits.

As your school nurse, I want to provide you with the information you need to safeguard your children's health and pave the way for a healthy school year. I hope you find this information useful.

Sincerely,
Judi Bernardi, RN
Gretchen Shippee, RN
ConVal High School Nurses
924-3869 ext. 4506 or 4402

References

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Parasites: Lice: Head Lice: Frequently Asked Questions. http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/gen_info/faqs.html. Accessed April 15, 2015.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Head lice: epidemiology and risk factors. <http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/epi.html>. Accessed April 15, 2015.
3. Meinking T, Taplin D, Vicaria M. Infestations. In: Schachner LA, Hansen RC, eds. *Pediatric Dermatology*, 4th ed. Mosby Elsevier; 2011:1525-1583.
4. Burkhart CG. Relationship of treatment-resistant head lice to the safety and efficacy of pediculicides. *Mayo Clin Proc*. 2004;79(5):661–666.
5. Meinking TL, Serrano L, Hard B, et al. Comparative in vitro pediculicidal efficacy of treatments in a resistant head lice population on the US. *Arch Dermatol*. 2002;138 (2):220–224.

LICE FACTS

Head lice cause unnecessary absence from school and work, millions of dollars misspent on remedies, and unnecessary treatment of misdiagnosed infestations.

Studies demonstrate that screening for head lice in schools does not decrease the incidence of head lice. Results of studies suggest that education of parents in identifying and managing head lice is more effective and that class wide or school wide screening should be discouraged.

The National Association of School Nurses, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, have all recommended that students with nits and/or head lice infestation not be excluded from school.

For more information:

www.nasn.org

www.cdc.gov

www.aap.org

<https://identify.us.com>

www.dhhs.nh.gov

Disclaimer:

The ConVal School District **does not** endorse or recommend any product, process or services. It is not the intent of the ConVal School District to provide specific medical advice but rather provide users with information to better understand the treatment of head lice. Specific medical advice cannot be provided and the ConVal School District urges you to consult with a qualified health care provider for diagnosis and treatment advice.

The ConVal School District is **not** responsible for the availability or content of the external web site links **nor** does the ConVal School District endorse, warrant or guarantee the products, services, or information described or offered at these internet sites.

Prepared by the ConVal School District school nurses.

Updated March 23, 2017

GUIDELINES ON HEAD LICE CONVAL SCHOOL DISTRICT



FAQ'S

Q. What are head lice?

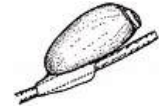
A. Head lice are insects about the size of sesame seeds, about 1/8th inch long, that only live on human heads. Their color can vary from gray to dark brown. Their food source is human blood. The presence of head lice is not due to lack of hygiene or cleanliness of the home. Head lice actually prefer clean



long hair.

Q. What are nits?

A. A nit is a teardrop shaped egg that is cemented to one side of the hair shaft about 1/4 inch from the scalp. A female louse can lay 6 – 8 nits a day. Nits hatch in 12 days into a nymph. The nymphs immediately begin feeding on the human head and become adult lice in 9 – 12 days.



Q. How long do lice live?

A. Adult lice live up to 30 days. Head lice usually survive for less than one day away from the scalp. Their eggs cannot hatch at a temperature lower than that near the scalp.

Q. How do I get head lice?

A. Head lice are wingless. They cannot hop, jump or fly. Head lice cling to hair and are mostly transmitted by direct head to head contact. Transmission by shared combs, brushes, hats, and helmets is not likely.

Q. How do I know if my child has head lice?

A. The best way is to find a live louse on the head. This can be difficult as they move extremely fast. The nits may be easier to spot at the nape of the neck, behind the ears, and on the crown of the head. Scratching may be noticed. However, the first time a person is infested, scratching may not be evident.

FAQ'S

Q. How do I treat a head lice/nit infestation?

A. The ConVal school district does not endorse any particular treatment. Some proper treatment options include:

- Pediculocides/ovicides – shampoos with pesticides are available over the counter and/or by prescription. **Be sure to read and follow all package instructions.**
- Suffocation – this includes suffocating the lice with mayonnaise or olive oil.
- Electronic devices – there are electronic combs available that detect and remove lice.
- Other agents, such as natural remedies, are available.

Check with your pharmacist or health care provider to determine which method is best and safe for your family. **NEVER** use any flammable substance such as kerosene or gasoline. Hair coloring, such as bleach or dye, is not an effective treatment.

Q. Should I treat all family members?

A. All family members should be carefully inspected for head lice and treated only if head lice are found.

Q. Who should be notified?

A. The parent/guardian should notify any close contacts such as playmates or friends who have slept over as transmission occurs by head to head contact. Notices are not sent home by the school.

Q. Can my pets get head lice?

No, head lice only live on human heads.

FAQ'S

Q. Do I need to get rid of the nits?

A. Yes. Every successful lice removal program must include manual nit picking. Lice combs work well, as do fingernails. Getting rid of head lice requires time and patience. Every strand of hair should be examined. Comb daily, or at least every few days, until no live lice are found for about 2 weeks.

Q. How do I treat my house?

A. The most important place to start is with the student and removal of lice/nits. Wash all clothing including outerwear. Wash all bed linen, pajamas, and towels. Wash/vacuum stuffed animals or store items that are not washable in a sealed plastic bag for 14 days. Drying items at temperatures greater than 130 degrees will kill stray lice or nits. Vacuum furniture, carpeting, and car where the student has been in contact in the past 48 hours.

Q. Should I spray my house with insect spray?

A. No, it is not recommended as exposure to humans cannot be controlled and nits are unlikely to incubate and hatch at room temperature. Note that head lice do not survive off the human head.

Q. Can my child get sick from head lice?

A. Head lice are a nuisance, however they are not known to spread any disease agents. The greatest danger is a secondary infection from scratching the head.

Q. Will a child with lice be sent home immediately?

A. Not necessarily. If a child has live lice, the possibility of transmission to others has been present for at least a month. Sending children home deprives them of valuable educational time. Using professional judgement, the school nurse will determine if the student needs to go home.

Q. Will my child's class be checked?

A. No. Screening for nits is not an accurate way of predicting if children are or will be, infested. Screening for live lice has not been proven to have a significant effect on the incidence of head lice in school.