

Goodrich Independent School District



District Nurse's Office

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LICE:

During the 2017 Legislative Session, Senate Bill 1566 passed into law and states the following: "The board of trustees of an independent school district shall adopt a policy requiring a school nurse of a public elementary school who determines or otherwise becomes aware that a child enrolled in the school has lice shall provide written or electronic notice of that fact to:

- (1) the parent of the child with lice as soon as practicable but not later than 48 hours after the administrator or nurse, as applicable, determines or becomes aware of that fact; and
- (2) the parent of each child assigned to the same classroom as the child with lice not later than the fifth school day after the date on which the administrator or nurse, as applicable, determines or becomes aware of that fact."

What are head lice? They're tiny, wingless, parasitic insects that live on the scalp and suck blood, causing severe itching. The good news is that head lice are more of a nuisance than a real threat to your child's health.

How will I know if my child has head lice: You can watch your child for frequent scratching often the first sign of infestation. If your child scratches a lot, especially around the back of the head or the ears, check for lice immediately.

Lice aren't easy to see: the bugs take on the color of the hair they're hiding in. You may never see a louse. It's common to discover an infestation of head lice based on lice eggs (nits) alone. Nits are also tiny, about the size of sesame seeds, and creamy off-white or pearly white. It's easy to confuse nits with dandruff, but nits are attached to the hair shaft with cement-like glue, not loose like dandruff.

How do I get rid of lice? Most people turn immediately to commercial or prescription lice shampoos. Keep in mind that using a lice **shampoo alone is unlikely to rid your child of lice.** To ensure your child remains free of lice, you must remove ALL the nits and follow up with a second shampoo treatment seven to ten days after the first.

How do I apply a lice shampoo? Here are the three basic steps:

1. **Shampoo** your child's hair with a fairly strong shampoo, such as Prell, to remove oil and styling products that might be coating the hair before using the lice remedy. Don't use conditioner, it also coats the hair and protects the pests.
2. **Let hair dry, then apply the lice shampoo.** The instructions on the label will tell you how long to leave it in. It's important to remember that these shampoos contain pesticides and should be used sparingly.
3. **Rinse** out the lice shampoo and **towel-dry** hair. Again, avoid using a conditioner, especially after shampooing. (Lice shampoo like Nix has some residual action, and conditioners interfere with that.)

What else do I have to do to get rid of these pests? You have to get rid of the nits, too. Why do experts call this the all-important step? It's a simple equation: Each remaining nit may hatch a new round of lice, making it crucial to breaking the cycle.

Here are some suggestions for making the nit-picking task less daunting.

- **Lighten up.** Bright sunlight is by far the best for your search; indoors, use a bright light such as a clip-on desk lamp that you can move close to your child's head.
 - **Magnify the problem.** Give your vision a boost with an inexpensive pair of magnifying reading glasses from your local drugstore; they'll double the effectiveness of your check.
 - **Divide and conquer.** Use hair clips to section hair and go through it strand by strand, sliding each nit off with your fingers. Drop it in a bowl of water. Pour the water down the drain when you're done.
 - **Use a good comb.** Plastic lice combs are less effective than long tooth metal combs.
 - **Nit-pick daily.** Check for nits and lice daily until your child has passed an all-clear inspection. This may take up to two weeks.
 - **Make a clean sweep.** Rid your home of lice. Each hardy little louse can live up to 48 hours off a host, can re-infect your child - or find a new head to live on.
 - **Vacuum** each room thoroughly, and wash all linens, towels, and clothes your child has recently worn in hot water (130 degrees Fahrenheit for 20 minutes). (Afterwards, return your water heater to 120 degrees; that's the safest way to prevent scalding-water burns in children.) An alternative to washing all your clothes and linens is simply to put them in a large, sealed plastic bag for 10 days; deprived of humans to feast on, the lice will die. Put all combs, brushes, and hair accessories in hot soapy water and let them soak overnight. **Don't forget the car:** Vacuum your child's seat and headrest. There's no need to use lice sprays; experts say they can expose your child to too much insecticide.
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- **Be persistent, and beware of stopping treatment too soon. It's common to hear parents say that their child has been repeatedly re-infested. In many cases, however, the lice were not completely eradicated the first time around. Remember, just a few overlooked nits can start a new generation of lice. Keep checking your child's head daily until you're sure the pests are gone; then check weekly to make sure your child hasn't picked up more unwanted pests.**