

# JCS Health Services

STUDENT'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## DEAR PARENT:

You are receiving this letter because we found either live lice and/ or an excessive number of nits (lice eggs) on your child's hair. **DO NOT FEEL EMBARRASSED!** This is a common problem among school-age children. **IT IS NOT A REFLECTION ON YOU AS A PARENT OR A HOUSEKEEPER!**

Several over-the-counter shampoos are available for the treatment of head lice. Check with your pharmacist for recommendations. If you choose to use any of the over-the-counter lice shampoos, **PLEASE FOLLOW THE DIRECTIONS AND DO NOT OVER USE.** Lice MD is an over the counter lice shampoo that is highly recommended.

There are prescription shampoos available. Please contact your doctor regarding a prescription for these shampoos. If you and your doctor decide to use *one of the prescription shampoos*, **please follow the directions carefully and do not over-use.**

The use of **olive oil** is an alternative to the use of lice shampoos. Coat the hair with olive oil and cover the hair with a shower cap. Leave the oil on for 2-4 hours, and then comb the hair with the nit comb. The oil smothers the live lice and makes the nit removal with a fine-tooth comb much easier. Shampoo with regular shampoo to remove the olive oil. The nice thing about the olive oil is that you can use it as often as you want without any worry of toxic effects. **Combing out the nits is very important. Once you have treated your child, check them daily for at least 2 weeks.**

***Please note:** The use of mayonnaise is no longer recommended for the treatment of head lice due to the growth of bacteria in the mayonnaise.*

**ALWAYS REMEMBER - IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO TREAT EVERYONE IN THE HOME, EXCEPT FOR THOSE UNDER THE AGE OF 2 AND THOSE WHO ARE PREGNANT.** The oil treatment will not be harmful to any age. But if in doubt, call your family physician or your obstetrician, if you are pregnant.

1. **CLEAN** all combs and brushes! You can use a Clorox solution or the lice shampoo. Also, double check barrettes, ponytail holders, headbands, etc. These can harbor nits as well as live lice. If you store combs and brushes in a drawer in the bathroom, empty the drawer and spray the drawer with anti-lice spray or wipe out with a Clorox solution.

2. **VACUUM!** The Center for Disease Control advises that vacuuming is a **major** part of cleaning the environment to prevent further re-infestation. According to the CDC, it is more important to vacuum all rugs, carpets, and upholstery (including the car upholstery) **than it is to spray.** **PLEASE BE CAREFUL ABOUT OVER-SPRAYING YOUR HOME!** The anti-lice sprays are **insecticides.** **IT CAN BE DANGEROUS TO YOUR FAMILY TO OVER-SPRAY, especially if someone in your family has asthma or any other respiratory illness!** Vacuum daily for at least 10 days.

3. **WASH** all coats, jackets, hats, hoods, etc. Be sure to wash the bed linens. Take any stuffed animals or other items that cannot be laundered and place them into a trash bag. Leave them in the trash bag for at least 10-14 days. Remove the items and place them in the dryer for a few minutes or

hang on the clothesline on a sunny day. Take the bed pillows and run them through a cycle in the dryer.

**SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF HEAD LICE:**

Head lice are very tiny insects that resemble small "sugar" ants. They are an opaque color (light brown). They move through the hair very quickly. **LICE DO NOT JUMP, HOP OR FLY!** They cannot crawl for long distances. They cannot survive in cold temperatures. Lice are very sensitive to drastic changes in temperature. Lice can only live off a human for 3 days. The nits, or lice eggs, are also very tiny and difficult to see with the naked eye. They are a whitish color and shine brightly when the light hits them. The nits are cemented to the hair shaft. It is impossible to pull the nit off the hair unless it is dead. The eggs, or nits, will hatch in 10 -14 days. The nit turns a dark brown color after it has hatched. **IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO CHECK YOUR CHILD AT LEAST 3 TIMES A WEEK IF NOT EVERY DAY WHEN THEY ARRIVE HOME FROM SCHOOL.** The sooner that you catch the problem - the better!

When examining your child's hair, look along the hairline on the back of the neck and behind the ears for tiny bite marks or signs of scratching. You will notice your child scratching his/her head frequently. Using a bright light when looking through the hair will help a great deal. Use a fine-tooth comb to remove all of the nits after you have treated the hair. The metal fine-tooth comb seems to work better.

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**We normally see a spike in the number of head lice cases about 7-10 days after picture day due to students sharing hair items. Even though we discourage this practice, children will be children.**

**WHEN YOUR CHILD RETURNS TO SCHOOL, HE/SHE MUST CHECK IN AT THE NURSE'S OFFICE TO BE CHECKED BEFORE RETURNING TO CLASS.**

**IF THE SCHOOL NURSE DETERMINES THAT A THOROUGH TREATMENT WAS NOT DONE ON YOUR CHILD AND HE/SHE STILL HAS LIVE LICE OR NUMEROUS NITS (EGGS), THEN YOU WILL BE ASKED TO PICK YOUR CHILD UP AT SCHOOL.**

**IF YOUR CHILD CONTINUES TO HAVE RECURRENT CASES OF LICE, THEN YOUR CHILD WILL BE REQUIRED TO BE CLEARED BY THE DISTRICT SCHOOL NURSE FOR ALL SUBSEQUENT OCCURRENCES OF LICE. Head checks are done by the district school nurse at the Jessamine Early Learning Village—Health Services located at 851 Wilmore Road Call 887-9274, for an appointment time.**

If you have any questions, please call. Thank you for your cooperation.