

**September is National Lice Prevention Month:
Parents, we would like to reduce the incidence of lice at Woodridge Elementary
Here's what you can do at home to help.**

- **Learn what lice look like.**
- **Learn how lice are passed around.**
- **Learn the signs and symptoms of a lice infestation.**
- **Parents: check your child's head for lice every week all school year long-make it a habit!**

Here's some information and guidelines for diagnosing and treating head lice.

WHAT ARE HEAD LICE?

- Lice are tiny insects that live in human hair.
- They hatch from small eggs which are called nits, which are attached to the base of the hairs.
- The eggs hatch in about 10 days.
- The new lice reach maturity in about two weeks.
- The female louse can live for 20 to 30 days, and is capable of laying 6 eggs/day.

HOW DOES A PERSON GET HEAD LICE?

- By physical contact with the hair of an infected person.
- By using the comb or brush of a person with lice.
- By wearing the hat, ribbon, head band, or scarf of a person with lice.
- By sharing towels or pillow cases with a person who has head lice.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF HEAD LICE?

- Itching of the head and back of the neck.
- Scratch marks or a rash on the scalp.
- **Presence of nits attached to individual hairs.** Nits look like grains of sugar and are firmly attached to the hair shaft.

HOW DO I TREAT HEAD LICE?

- Check all family members when lice are found on anyone in the house.
- Purchase one of the lice treatment shampoos at your local drug store. Follow directions on the package very carefully.
- Using the fine-tooth comb, comb out all nits from the hair strands. **Continue to remove all nits and check daily for nits for two weeks-this is a must!**
- The US Department of Health and Human Services recommends re-treatment of infested people in 8 to 10 days because of the possibility of self-infestation from hatching eggs missed during the first treatment—do not use more than twice.
- Apply lice treatment solution to combs and brushes and soak in hot water for 5 to 10 minutes.
- Wash all clothing and items that have come in contact with the infested person's head in hot water. Items that cannot be washed or dry cleaned should be sealed in a plastic bag for 14 days.
- Thoroughly vacuum carpets, upholstery, and mattresses.

Lice Websites:

- Seattle King County Department of Health: <http://www.metrokc.gov/health/preventtheadlice.htm>
- Harvard Public Health: <http://www.zeph.harvard.edu/headlice.html>
- **Please notify your school office/nurse/teacher so preventive measures can take place.**

Thank you for your cooperation.

Neil Garvin, R.N. School Nurse 456-6214 Mondays, 456-5507 Tues, Wed, Thursdays.