

Pediculosis (Head Lice)

Here are the facts.

1. Lice do not jump or fly. They are acquired from direct head to head contact.
2. Infestations are rarely spread by inanimate objects (books, chairs etc). Lice cannot survive off the host for more than a day or two. A viable louse will not leave a healthy host.
3. Animals (dogs, cats, etc) do not spread lice.
4. Nits (lice eggs) do not mean an active infection. Nits more than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch from the scalp are not viable.
5. When a child is diagnosed with lice, they have probably been infested for a month or more.
6. Be careful with lice shampoos. They contain toxic chemicals and caregivers must follow the directions carefully.
7. School nurses remain the best trained screeners.
8. Personal hygiene, socio-economic group, boys or girls have nothing to do with lice infestation. Lice love everyone.
9. Head lice while annoying do not pose a health risk.
10. While it may be embarrassing, your child's school nurse and parents of playmates should be notified if your child is diagnosed with head lice. Parent cooperation will help protect all children even your own.