

Lice FAQs

Presented by Jordan School District Nurses

What is the difference between live lice and nits?

Nits are lice eggs. They look yellow or white and stick to hair like glue. When the eggs hatch, the lice can be a tan color or grayish-white color. Adult lice can be as big as a sesame seed.

Do lice carry disease?

No. Lice do not carry disease or pose a serious health problem. Lice are not usually confined to schools. It is found in the community in various places. There is no need to panic if a person has lice. Anyone can get head lice.

Do lice fly or jump?

No.

There is a student(s) at school with nits, what do we do?

The student does not have to check out of school. Contact parents and ask if their child has received a lice shampoo treatment within the last 7 days. If yes, remind them to continue combing out the nits on a daily basis to remove them. If no, advise the parents to begin the lice shampoo treatment when the child returns home from school.

What do we do if we find out about a student(s) with live (crawling) lice?

Notify parents. Advise parent to treat their child with lice shampoo at home. Per the CDC, students do not need to be sent home early. They may return to school after appropriate treatment has begun. Information about lice treatment may be given to parents. If the student has already received a treatment, suggest another shampoo treatment 7-10 days after the first treatment. Encourage combing out nits daily for at least 10 days.

Do we have to notify other parents if there are cases of lice at school?

No. Parents and students should be treated with respect. Confidentiality must be strictly maintained. Principals may choose to notify parents depending on the situation.

What are your suggestions for cleaning the classroom?

Vacuum the carpet thoroughly including upholstered furniture and rugs. Double bag pillows and stuffed animals for two weeks. Headphones should be cleaned with approved district cleansers. There is no need to fumigate.

Do you have any recommendations for stopping the spread of lice in school?

Students may hang their coats behind their chairs or they may place them in plastic bags that are provided by the school. Hats and scarves may be kept in the student's backpack. Remind students not to share combs, hats, scarves and other hair accessories. Do not form close reading groups where the students' heads can touch.

What if there is a student that has persistent lice?

A second shampoo treatment can be repeated 7-10 days later. Remind parents to comb their child's hair daily to remove nits and lice. Suggest ways of cleaning the home environment – vacuum thoroughly, wash bedding in hot water, checking other members of the household for lice, bagging stuffed animals and pillows, etc.

Do I need to recheck a student for lice after he/she returns to school?

No. Only if you suspect persistent lice.

Is there a letter that can be sent out to parents to notify them of a lice outbreak?

A letter is usually not sent out. A letter may be sent out at the direction of the principal if there is an outbreak.

What if a parent cannot afford lice shampoo?

Contact your assigned district nurse.

Will the district nurse screen students for lice?

At the request of the principal, district nurses may provide training to a school on how to check for lice. Nurses are available for education and consultation. Routine lice checks or mass screenings are discouraged.

Where can I get more information about lice?

The local health department - <https://epi.health.utah.gov/head-lice/>

Centers for Disease Control - <https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/schools.html>

National School Nurse Association - <https://www.nasn.org/nasn-resources/resources-by-topic/head-lice>