



WENDELL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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Dos and Don'ts of Head Lice

What are head lice? How did I get them? What are the signs of having them?

Head louse, or *Pediculus humanus capitis*, is a parasitic insect that can be found on the head, eyebrows, and eyelashes of people. Head lice feed on human blood several times a day and live close to the human scalp. Head lice are not known to spread disease.

Head lice move by crawling; they cannot hop or fly. Head lice are spread by direct contact with the hair of an infested person. Anyone who comes in head-to-head contact with someone who already has head lice is at greatest risk. Spread by contact with clothing (such as hats, scarves, coats) or other personal items (such as combs, brushes, or towels) used by an infested person is uncommon. Personal hygiene or cleanliness in home or school has nothing to do with getting head lice.

Signs and symptoms of head lice are:

- Tickling feeling of something moving in the hair.
- Itching, caused by an allergic reaction to the bites of the head louse.
- Irritability and difficulty sleeping; head lice are most active in the dark.
- Sores on the head caused by scratching. These sores can sometimes become infected with bacteria found on the person's skin

What does Wendell School District say about Head Lice Prevention?

The school principal or designee will screen students for head lice. If nits (egg cases) or lice are present, the student will be excluded from school until the student is nit- and lice-free.

The parents/guardian of an infested student will be requested orally and/or in writing to come to school and take the student home.

Proof of treatment must be given to the principal or designee prior to the student returning to school. The student will be reexamined before readmission.

Special points of interest:

Head lice do not like heat.

- Use blow dryers
- Wash hair thoroughly with special shampoo
- Brush and comb hair before school and before bed.
- Wash and dryer clothing, bedding, toys, etc.