

To the Parents and Guardians of Kenton City Schools' Students:

This letter is to raise awareness of a typical, common pest that affects children. That is head lice.

There are no epidemics of this pest in Kenton City Schools, so I wanted to squelch that rumor!

The problem with head lice is that it is a friendly pest who doesn't care what socio-economic status the child or adult has. Having lice has nothing to do with your home hygiene or being a good or bad parent.

Another problem is that some parents/guardians fail to inform the school that they have found head lice on their child. Therefore, with the school not knowing, the spread is often not contained.

Once the school is notified that you have found head lice or nits, the school secretary notifies the school's nurse who comes and checks that particular classroom, checks siblings and co-habitants for this as well.

Here is current information about head lice that I hope you find helpful.

Head lice infestations are a common problem in infants and children, even in those who practice good hygiene and frequent hair washing. Lice only infect humans and they are spread by direct contact with someone who is already infected or by use of their belongings (such as hats, brushes or combs).

The most common symptom of children infected with head lice is **itching**, although some children do not complain if they have a light infestation.

Adult lice are reddish-brown and 1/16 of an inch long. They move very fast and are most commonly seen at the back of the neck and behind the ears. Lice can only survive for two to three days when off of the human body. **Nits** are eggs from the adult lice. They can appear as very small black, tightly attached dots on the hair shaft about 1/16 of an inch from the scalp to pearly white and are firmly attached to hairs. The eggs hatch in 6-10 days and it then takes another two to three weeks for the lice to mature and be able to reproduce. Even after nits hatch, the casing can stay on the hair for a long time and it is hard to tell the difference between a nit with a live louse embryo in it, which can be infectious, and an empty one. Nits are more likely to contain a live embryo if they are close to the scalp. Head lice infect hair on the head. They are easiest to see on the neck and over the ears, using very bright light or natural sunshine. Tiny eggs on the hair look like flakes of dandruff. However, instead of flaking off the scalp, they stay put.

Although many schools and day care centers have no nit policies, Kenton City Schools does have a lice policy. This policy states that the child must be lice and nit free to be able to return to school. The child must have a clearance statement for return from either the School Nurse, a health department Nurse or the child's physician.

It is very important to inform the school if you find head lice. It is also very important to treat the child/ren and adults who have head lice and nits with appropriate solutions.

PLEASE DO NOT USE KEROSENE OR ANY OTHER PETROLEUM PRODUCT ON THE CHILD OR ADULT SINCE THESE ARE VERY TOXIC!

Where Can You Get Help with Head Lice:

1. Call your family physician for prescription assistance for head lice treatments.
2. Call the Kenton Hardin Health Department at 419-673-6230 for enzyme treatment options.
3. Call Hardin County Educational Service Center at 419-674-2288 ask to talk with Peg Clawson, Home and School Outreach Coordinator, for assistance with use of magnifying lamps, household products and educational materials, which she will bring to your home free of charge.
4. Use of mayonnaise, or vegetable oil or olive oil with saturation of the hair, put on a shower cap over the saturated hair, leaving it on for 8 hours. Shampoo the hair with liquid dish soap, rinse, followed by hair shampoo. Then use a fine tooth comb, separate the hair by sections and go thru the strands of hair pulling off the nits with your fingertips. All nits must be removed before the child can return to school, per Kenton City Schools' policy, and the child/adult's head must be checked by either the Kenton City Schools' Nurse, your child's physician or an R.N. at the Kenton Hardin Health Department.
5. **IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO ACCURATELY FOLLOW THE LABEL INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE. DO NOT REPEAT THE PRESCRIPTION OR ACROSS THE COUNTER TREATMENTS ANY MORE FREQUENTLY THAN ONCE PER WEEK.** These products contain an insecticide that can be harmful to the child or adult if used more frequently than prescribed.
6. Once the child is nit and lice free, bedding, back packs, hair products, brushes, combs, upholstery in your cars should be cleaned thoroughly.
7. Wash and dry bedding in hot water and dryer.
8. Place all stuffed toys that cannot be laundered in a garbage bag that you tie shut for 3 weeks.

If you have any additional concerns or comments about this letter of information, please call Kenton City Schools Nurse at 419-673-0775, ext. 31.

Thank you for your consideration in this health related matter.

Sincerely,

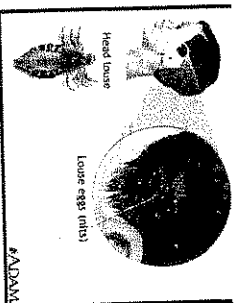
Brenda Jennings, R.N., B.A.
Brenda Jennings, R.N., B.A., Kenton City Schools Nurse



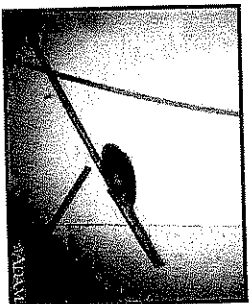
Head louse - female



Head louse infestation...



Head lice



Nit on human hair

Nit on human hair



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