

# PEDICULOSIS CONTROL (HEAD LICE)

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### **A. Information**

Head lice are parasitic insects found on the heads of people. As many as 6-12 million people worldwide get head lice each year. Anyone who comes in close contact with someone who already has head lice, contaminated clothing, and other belongings is at risk for contacting head lice. According to the [National Pediculosis Association](#) (NPA), “Head lice can be spread whenever there is direct contact of the head or hair of an infested individual. Lice can also be spread by the sharing of personal article like hats, towels, brushes, helmets, hair ties and so on. There is also a possibility that head lice can be spread via a headrest, pillow, or similar item. Head lice do not jump or fly and generally cannot survive longer than twenty four hours off of the host.” It is important to understand that, although lice can be transmitted from child to child if there is close head to head contact, **head lice does not transmit disease.**

### **B. Use of Insecticides for the Environment Control of Pediculosis in Schools**

The NPA warns against the use of lice sprays as follows. “Using lice sprays on bedding, furniture, and carpets is unwarranted, and may pose personal and environmental hazards. The recommendation for vacuuming is the safest and most effective alternative to spraying...”

Note: A [Head Lice Infestation Fact Sheet](#) is provided by [Student Health Services](#).

### **C. Pediculosis Control Measure**

If a child has symptoms consistent with head lice (signs of persistent scalp itching), the child should be discretely referred to clinic personnel for examination. Specific attention should be paid to the back of the head and scalp, and lice should be distinguished from dandruff, dirt, or other insects that may have flown into the child’s hair. If the child has signs of infestation, their parent should be contacted.

School Health personnel should review the guidance from the Center of Disease Control with the parent (<http://www.cdc.gov/lice/head/treatment.html>) and advise the parent to consult their private medical provider.

Schools may keep a list of children who have been sent home for treatment of head lice. If properly treated the child should be returned to school within 72 hours or less. Children should not miss excessive days from school for head lice infestation. If the child’s absence is prolonged the family will be contacted and further assistance will be offered.

Any information released to the media concerning school health pediculosis procedures must have the approval of the Superintendent of Schools or designees, prior to adoption or release in order to insure clarity and consistency in communication.

Source: The Volusia County School Districts' Student Health Services department and the Student and Family Policy Guide and Code of Student Conduct and Discipline.