

FROM THE NURSE'S OFFICE

With the winter approaching, comes an increase of health concerns. We, the nurses of Montoursville Area School District, are providing some information that we feel will be helpful to you as a parent. Our goal is to provide a safe and healthy environment for your child in order for them to receive the optimum educational experience. Please review the information below. If you have any questions, please contact your child's school nurse. It is **VERY IMPORTANT** that you keep the school nurse updated with any changes in your child's health, in order for her to provide the best possible care to your child while they are in school.

Head Lice Education:

As you may know, head lice cases are common among school-aged children. An estimated 6-12 million infestations occur each year in the United States, most commonly among children ages 3 to 11. ¹ The Montoursville Area School District will be following the PA School Code Directives concerning "communicable disease and infestations". I am writing to you to help you learn what you can do if lice hit your home.

What are head lice? Head Lice are one of the most common conditions among school-age children. They are tiny, wingless insects that live close to the human scalp. They feed on human blood. Head lice aren't dangerous, but they are a nuisance.

How did my child get head lice? Head lice mostly spread by direct head-to-head contact - during play time, slumber parties, sports activities, camp, or other activities. ² They cannot jump or fly and move only by crawling. Lice only survive 1 to 2 days off the human body. It's possible but uncommon to get head lice by using another person's comb, brush, hat, scarf, bandana, hair and, or item used on the hair or head. Pets do not become infested with head lice and do not spread them. If you spot even a single louse, your child has an infestation and needs to be treated. ¹

My child has head lice. Now what? If head lice are found on your child's hair or scalp, DON'T PANIC, remember, head lice do not cause any disease. Talk with your school nurse, pediatrician, or family physician to get appropriate care.

- Apply a special medicated shampoo or creme rinse which can be purchased at the drug store.
- Apply the shampoo/creme rinse according to the directions on the bottle. Do NOT use on eyebrows or eyelashes.
- Wait the specified length of time for the shampoo to be effective, and then wash the hair thoroughly with warm water and regular shampoo. If using creme rinse, follow direction on the bottle.
- Using a fine toothed steel comb, comb the infested area to assist in the removal of the dead lice and eggs (nits). In some cases, you may have to use your fingernails to rid the hair of nits. It is best to be free of all nits.
- Inspection for and treatment of head lice should be carried out with a light shining directly on the hair.
- As treatment can be accomplished in an afternoon or evening, children should return to school the next day.
- All bedding, clothing, towels, etc. should be washed in hot water (130°F) with detergent and machined dried.
- Special sprays, available in drug stores, are not necessary. Simple vacuuming of these areas is also effective, provided they are vacuumed thoroughly. (DO NOT SPRAY PEOPLE, ANIMALS OR UNDERCLOTHING.)
- Lice do not hide in wall crevice or floor cracks. Treatment of these areas is useless.
- Bag any unwashable items for 10 days.

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Frequently asked questions (FAQs). http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/gen_info/faqs.html. Accessed May 20,2016.

² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Epidemiology and risk factors. <http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/epi.html>. Accessed May 20,2016.

It's cold and flu season



Here are some helpful guidelines you should follow when making the decision to either send your child to school or keep them home.

It is OK to send your child to school when:

- They have mild cold symptoms, as long as they are comfortable and are fever-free.
- They have mildly red eyes with no discharge or matting

KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL WHEN:

- They have a temperature of 100 degrees or more
- They have red eye(s) accompanied with discharge or matting
- They have vomited the evening/night before school.
- They have persistent diarrhea
- They have been diagnosed with an infection (such as "pink eye" or strep throat). Your child should be on antibiotics for at least 24 hours before returning to school.

Encourage your child to practice good hand-washing habits, get plenty of rest, and drink plenty of fluids.

YOUR CHILD MUST STAY OUT OF SCHOOL UNTIL HE/SHE IS FEVER-FREE FOR 24 HOURS WITHOUT THE USE OF FEVER REDUCING MEDICATION. These include but are not limited to: Tylenol, Acetaminophen, Advil, Ibuprofen, Motrin or medications containing the above medicines.

It is important to keep your child home from ALL extra-curricular activities and work.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact your child's school nurse.