



Rhonda Shirley  
HS Health Coordinator

304 E. Houston St.  
Linden, Texas 75563

Phone: 903-756-5596  
Fax: 903-756-7294

## PEDICULOSIS REFERRAL LETTER

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parent of \_\_\_\_\_

Your child was sent home from school today because he/she has head lice. This is an easily treated condition that is generally not associated with any serious medical complications. This letter will acquaint you with the nature of this infestation and what should be done to get rid of it.

How you get it: Head lice are usually transmitted through close personal contact with another infested individual, through sharing combs, brushes, and other grooming aids, through sharing hats, caps, wigs or coats; or through mingling of these items at the homes of friends, at school, at church, or other public places. Most parents have the impression that only persons who are unclean become infested with lice. In the case of head lice this is NOT TRUE. Frequent bathing will neither prevent head lice nor eliminate an infestation once it has become established.

What to Look for: Head lice are elongated insects about the size of a long dash (--) and are grayish-white with dark margins. Lice do not have wings; therefore, they CANNOT fly. Although they DO NOT jump, they do move very quickly, this makes them difficult to find in a child's hair.

Since crawling forms are so difficult to find, head louse infestation is frequently diagnosed by finding nits. A nit is a louse egg. Nits are tear-drop shaped, about the size of a dash (-), and vary from yellowish-brown to white. Head lice attach each nit to a hair shaft with a waterproof, cement-like substance. Nits cannot be washed out or brushed out of the hair like dandruff or other debris that may look like nits to the naked eye. Clusters of nits may be found in any section of hair, but in light infestations, a careful examination of the entire scalp may be necessary to detect them.

Treatment: It is necessary to treat the infested individual and his or her personal articles like caps, combs, brushes, towels, and bedding. Fumigating or using insecticides in the home, school, school busses is not recommended by the U.S. Public Health Service.

**A. Individual Treatment**

1. Remove all of your child's clothing and place him/her in a bath or shower stall.
2. Apply head louse shampoo according to your physician's instructions or label instructions provided by the drug manufacturer.
3. Have you child put on clean clothing after the treatment.
4. Repeat the treatment in 7-10 days.
5. All family members and close friends of your child should be examined for head lice infestation. Family members who have crawling lice OR nits should be treated. A sibling or a parent who shares a bed with an infested child should be treated even if there is no evidence of infestation at the time of the examination.

Between 7-10 days after the initial treatment, the student must be retreated and checked in through the Family Services Department or the Center Director with the *Second Treatment Form* signed by the parent.

**B. Decontamination of Personal Articles and Environment:** Since heat kills lice and their eggs, many personal articles can be disinfested by machine washing in HOT water and/or drying using the HOT cycle of the dryer. Eggs are killed in 5 minutes at 51.5 degrees C (125 degrees F) and adult lice succumb to slightly lower temperatures. Home hot water heaters keep water at about 60 degrees C when the heat selector is set on medium to high. However, some water heaters do not sustain the 60 degree C water temperature when several loads of laundry are washed one after the other or when other demands for hot water (such a bathing) are made simultaneously. To maintain the water at 60 degrees C or higher, allow time between loads of laundry or baths for the water heater to regain its maximum water temperature. If you depend on the clothes dryer for disinfestation, dry articles for a least 20 minutes at the high setting. Some nonwashable articles may be disinfested in the dryer if the heat will not harm them.

1. Machine wash all washable clothing and bed linens that have been in contact with your child the previous 2 days.
2. Personal articles of clothing or bedding that cannot be washed or dried may be dry cleaned or simply placed in a plastic bag and sealed for 10 days.
3. Combs, brushes, and similar items can be disinfested by soaking them for 1 hour in one of the pediculicide shampoos or by soaking them for 5-10 minutes in a pan of water heated on the stove to about 150 degrees F. (Caution: heat may damage some combs and brushes.)
4. Because lice can live only a short time if they fall OFF the head, the U.S. Public Health Service recommends that you limit cleaning of carpets, upholstered furniture, etc., to simply vacuuming. Using insecticides or fumigants on upholstered furniture, carpets, bedding, etc., is not necessary.

Notification of Other Parents: Parents of your child's closest friend(s) should be notified that their child may also be infested. This is particularly important if the children have slept together or participated in activities involving frequent body contact such as wresting, ballet classes, football, etc.

Returning to School: A student who has been excluded for active pediculosis is to be readmitted to school after the initial treatment and disinfestation of personal articles. Student's MUST check in through Family Services or the Campus Director. If active infestation remains, the student will not be allowed to attend classes. **The bottle of shampoo used must accompany students along with the *Initial Treatment form* signed by the parent or guardian.**

If you have any questions regarding treatment of pediculosis or re-admittance to school, contact the school Center Director or the Health Coordinator at 903-756-5596 ext. 217.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter,  
CSNT HEALTH SERVICES