

Head Lice

Head lice, also known as pediculosis, can be itchy and uncomfortable, but are not a major public health concern. They do not spread illness or disease. Head lice spread from person to person. Schools, parents and the school public health nurse all have a role to play in the control and management of head lice.

Health Authority's role

The school public health nurse does not perform individual or group checks, support mass screening head checks or provide treatment to individuals or groups. Instead, he or she will:

- Ensure schools are provided with standardized, evidence-based head lice information for staff, teachers and parents.
- Act as a resource for clarification or information about the management of head lice including speaking to parent groups, advisory meetings or preschool/kindergarten entry meetings as requested.
- Provide support and resources to schools for development of head lice management practices. We do not support exclusion from school due to head lice.
- Build capacity of facility staff, parents and other caregivers in the treatment and management of head lice.

School's role

- Implement head lice management protocols and guidelines based on best practices and health recommendations. Our head lice package includes a [notice to parents](#), [head lice in the classroom letter](#), [fact sheet](#) and [treatment options](#) materials for you to use.
- Promote best practices for head lice management as outlined by the public health nurse. This can include holding annual or biannual head lice awareness weeks where activities are designed to promote facts and dispel myths or distributing ongoing awareness materials and head check reminders via newsletters, websites, bulletin boards, health fairs, open houses, parent-teacher evenings, PAC meetings or other group events.
- Develop a resource library or section on the school website with information and best practice guidelines for management of head lice.

Parents' role

- Take a proactive approach in understanding lice facts and myths.
- Teach your child about prevention of head lice (not sharing hats, headsets, scarves, helmets, etc)
- Ask questions and get information about lice, prevention and treatment options.
- Check the heads of every member of the household when lice have been identified in a close contact.
- Only treat household members who actually have head lice.
- Use a recommended treatment.



Bed Bugs

About Bed Bugs

Bed bugs are small, brownish insects that feed on the blood of people, other mammals and birds. They are about 4-5 mm (1/4 inch) long. Bed bugs can crawl very quickly on floor, walls and ceilings.

Bed bugs lay tiny, whitish eggs that are so small they are hard to see, and can live for up to a year without feeding.

They are most active in warm weather, coming out at night to feed. They usually bite people on exposed skin at night, when they are sleeping.

They live and hide in the folds of mattresses, in bed frames, and behind baseboards. They like dark, out of the way places to hide.

Some people get an itchy swelling from a bed bug bite. There may be blood stains or fecal matter (bed bug poop) on sheets and pillow cases.

How are Bed Bugs Spread?

They hitch rides on objects such as purses, clothing, furniture and luggage to travel from place to place.

How are Bed Bugs Controlled?

Bed bugs are difficult to deal with and require treatment by a certified pest control technician.

Resources

For more information about bed bugs click [here](#)

For information about bed bug control in Vancouver, click [here](#)