

11-16-11

Health News

Now is the time of the year to watch for head lice. We are experiencing some cases in Stratford. We have reported cases at St. James.

Your first clue may be a child scratching an itchy head or a note from me. Lice are tiny insects, about 1-2 millimeters long that crawl quickly. They do not jump or fly. They feed and reproduce only on humans and they like all humans, young as well as old, boys as well as girls, short hair as well as long hair, clean hair as well as not-so-shiny hair. They can live away from humans, though, on hats, earmuffs, combs, hair ribbons, pillows, football and hockey helmets, headphones, couches and stuffed animals for two whole days. Their eggs, called nits, can survive as long as ten days.

To identify lice, look for nits or lice close to the scalp, especially at the nape of the neck, behind the ears and sometimes in the hair over the forehead. Search for nits - they're tiny white specks that look like dandruff but stick and don't brush off as dandruff does. A bright light and a magnifying glass can help you to see the tiny nits.

To prevent the spread of head lice, don't share any items that touch your hair and be careful with head-to-head contact.

If you think you may have lice in your family, contact your doctor and the school nurse for specific help and answers for your questions. All children with head lice may not come to school until they are nit-free. They must be seen by the school nurse before returning to class.

Feel free to call with any questions or concerns, 203-375-5994.