



Abbotts Hill Elementary Clinic News

Please see the reverse side for more important information.

November 21, 2008

What You Need to Know About Strep Throat

Strep throat is a common infectious illness in children. The infection is spread from person to person through contact with droplets from the nose and mouth of an infected person. The illness can develop within one to five days after coming in contact with an infected person. A person is most contagious from onset of symptoms until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment. A child diagnosed with strep throat should only return to school after receiving at least 24 hours of antibiotic treatment and has no fever for 24 hours. We are asking parents to provide the school with a written document from the student's physician clearing him/her to return to school when a student is diagnosed with strep throat. In addition, should your child be diagnosed with strep throat, it is important that he/she completes the entire course of antibiotics, even if the symptoms improve prior to completing the medication.



Too Sick for School?

When should the parent be called to come and pick up the student? Or when should the student be kept at home due to illness? While each situation is individualized, the well-being of the student and the entire class are considered. Here are some general guidelines recommended by Children's Healthcare of Atlanta that are used:

Students Should Not Be At School With:

Symptom	Detail	When to return
Fever	100.4 or more - usually a sign of an infection that may be contagious	Fever free for 24 hrs
Vomiting	Not induced by cough or reflux	Able to maintain normal diet
Diarrhea	May lead to dehydration or be infectious	Diarrhea free
Frequent persistent cough	May indicate secondary infection - sinusitis / pneumonia / asthma	Minimal coughing or treatment begun
Infectious Illness - strep throat / pink eye, flu, etc.	Is contagious to staff and other students	On antibiotics or treatment for 24 hours
Widespread Rash	Cause unknown or unexplained	Cause determined non-infectious
Persistent Pain	Cause needs evaluation	Pain free

These recommendations have been adopted by Fulton County Schools and are followed by the clinic assistant in your child's school. Please consult your child's healthcare provider when your child has the above symptoms to determine if an office visit is necessary. Also as you observe changes in your student's health, subtle or obvious, please inform the staff to give us a "heads up" concerning your child's health. If your child is diagnosed with a communicable illness, please inform the school.

Rose Moro, RN

LICE UPDATE

Lice are in the Community. The Alpharetta / Johns Creek Area has had an increase in the number of cases of head lice since last spring. What are Lice?

Head Lice are parasitic insects that can be found most commonly in the hair on the human scalp. Head lice feed on human blood several times a day and live close to the human scalp. Lice have claws and grip onto the hair shaft. They can live 48 hours without a human host. Lice do not jump. They are most commonly transferred in direct contact: sharing of linens/pillows, hats, brushes, combs, and sleepovers.

What do head lice look like?

Lice begin as nits. Nits are lice eggs which are firmly attached to the hair shaft and are oval-shaped and very small. They are hard to see, but often appear yellow or white. They will not brush away or move like dry skin or dandruff. If crawling lice are not seen, finding nits firmly attached within a 1/4 inch of base of the hair shafts strongly suggests a head lice infestation. Nits that are attached more than 1/4 inch from the base of the hair shaft are almost always dead or already hatched. The fully grown and developed adult louse is about the size of a sesame seed, has six legs and is tan to grayish-white in color. It will crawl on the hair strand.

What are the signs and symptoms of head lice?

- Tickling feeling of something moving in the hair.
- Itching, caused by an allergic reaction to the bites of the head louse.
- Irritability and difficulty sleeping (head lice are most active in the dark)
- Sores on the head caused by scratching

How are head lice treated?

Head lice medications are available over-the-counter without a prescription at local drug stores and pharmacies. It is important to note that these medicated shampoos only kill the bugs. The medication does not penetrate the nit shell. In addition to treating with a medicated shampoo you must pick the nits off the hair shaft using a lice comb.

One louse can lay 8 nits in one day. The nits hatch within 7-10 days producing more lice. This is why it is very important to check the hair for several days after treatment and remove the remaining nits. Always check at the base of the skull and around the ears. These are the warmest part of the head and where you are more likely to see nits/lice.

The CDC (Center for Disease Control) recommends a second treatment in 7-10 days.

What to do if your child is sent home with a case of lice?

Please don't panic! Lice are very common in school-aged children. Having a case of lice is not in anyway related to being "unclean" or having dirty hair. Generally speaking, the cleaner the hair the more lice like it. Please treat the infestation with a recommended over-the-counter product.

- Check all members of the household and treat if needed.
- Only treat active bugs. The medication does not kill the nit.
- In bright light, with a magnifying glass, comb the hair with a lice comb. All nits need to be removed. This can be a slow process, especially with long hair. This needs to be done for several days to ensure all nits are gone.
- Wash all linens, blankets, comforters and clothes worn within the last 2 days in hot water. Dry in a hot dryer.
- Place non-washable items (stuffed animals, pillows, throw rugs) in a green plastic bag and seal for 2 weeks
- Regular vacuuming of carpets, sofas, and cushioned car seats is recommended.
- Encourage the person to not share hats, scarves, hair brushes, ribbons or combs.
- Wash all combs and hair brushes in hot soapy water and soak for one hour.

If the infestation lingers more than 2 weeks, please contact your doctor. Some infestations are more difficult to get rid of than others.