

Camp Alleghany's Lice Policy and Treatment/Prevention Plan

Head lice have reappeared over the past few years in schools, camps, and workplaces across the U.S. This is a national issue that is discussed and addressed at length at several American Camp Association conferences that we have attended over the past few years, and self-contained communities like camps are especially vulnerable and must be vigilant to control this problem. Despite taking every precaution and doing our very best to keep this out of camp, it still made its way into Alleghany in the past. Due to the extreme time-consuming and costly nature of trying to get rid of it, we have chosen to partner with the Nit Fairies, a professional lice screening and treatment service, to screen all campers before they enter camp and to treat any campers who arrive with lice or nits. Although our nurses have done these checks in the past, we feel better served by outside specialists as our medical staff is consumed with other important responsibilities on Opening Day.

Lice is a very common problem and not one that occurs from being "dirty." It also can not live without a human host, so it's not possible for lice to be living at camp prior to campers arriving. The only way it gets in to camp is on a person. The ACA's educational web page on lice has excellent information for you to read about this topic. Additionally, the CDC as well as Kids' Health have excellent websites with plenty of information. Lastly, this wonderful and informative site called Mothers Against Head Lice will offer a wealth of information and advice. You will see from reading those websites that we are doing everything we should be doing to prevent and control the spread of lice in camp. Below is our step-by-step plan so that you are prepared when you arrive at camp.

Step 1: Camp Alleghany's Policies

First, Camp Alleghany's No Lice/No Nits Policy is stated in the Parent Handbook:

Camp Alleghany's No Lice/Nits Policy

Head lice have reappeared over the past few years in schools and camps across the U.S. Self-contained communities like camps are especially vulnerable and must be vigilant to control this problem. To combat head lice, we will be contracting the services of an experienced, professional company to check all campers on the first day of camp. Although our medical staff has done these checks in the past, we feel better served by outside specialists.

If any positive cases of lice are found, they will treat the camper on-site. The camper's parent will be billed for this service if needed. We will begin treatment immediately so that campers can stay in their tents on the first night of camp. We will also put all of that camper's clothing and bedding in a hot dryer for 20 minutes.

We encourage you to have your child checked for head lice by a school nurse or pediatrician two weeks prior to departure and again immediately before camp begins. If any sign of head lice is found, please call your pediatrician to arrange for appropriate and immediate treatment well BEFORE your child leaves for camp and let us know that such treatment has taken place. If your child had head lice or was exposed to it (family member, friend, schoolmate, etc.) within four weeks of her arrival to camp, please notify us. We are committed to doing all we can to keep lice out of our community.

****Please be aware! Having your pediatrician check for lice prior to arrival at camp is NOT always a guarantee, as there is a 3 to 7 day period of gestation during which the nits are invisible.***

Additionally, upon registering your daughter, all parents initialed this statement:

I understand that Camp Alleghany will contract with a professional lice screening/treatment service, and I will pay that company to treat my daughter should she arrive at camp with lice or nits. I have the option of taking her home to treat her if I wish.

Step 2: Prevention Before Camp

On our website we have a special order form to purchase lice prevention shampoo from the Nit Fairies before camp begins. This is completely optional and not required, but we **encourage families to take preventive measures** before coming to camp (even if it is not this exact product). The Nit Fairies' products are organic, and therefore safe to use every day, whereas many of the over-the-counter lice shampoos contain harsh chemicals and can only be used once per week (more information can be found on this topic at Mothers Against Head Lice). These products are also 99% effective with the first treatment. Their website also has a wealth of information regarding lice in general and the best/most effective ways of treating it.

We especially encourage campers who are traveling by bus or plane to purchase and use the preventive products.

You can also take the time to put all of your daughter's clothing, bedding, stuffed animals, etc in a high-heat dryer for 30 minutes prior to packing them up in her trunk. As long as these items don't come in to contact with anyone or anything else between the dryer and the trunk, this may kill any lice or nits that might be on her belongings that you aren't aware of.

Step 3: Screening Upon Arrival at Camp Alleghany

When your daughter arrives at camp, she will have a brief medical check-in with our medical staff, and then proceed to the lice screening station. One of the Nit Fairies' professional lice screening technicians will check her hair, and any case of lice or nits found will then be verified/confirmed by one of our own medical staff members.

Step 4: If Lice/Nits are Found...

If any positive cases of lice are found, the Nit Fairies technicians will treat the camper on-site with their own products. We will begin treatment immediately so that campers can stay in their tents on the first night of camp, and the camper's parent will be billed \$100 for this service. If a parent chooses not to pay for this service, he or she may take her daughter home to be treated and bring her back after she is completely lice-free (see Mothers Against Head Lice for full treatment procedures at home).

Additionally, all of her clothing and linens will be put in a high-heat dryer for approximately 30 minutes prior to being delivered to her tent. This process kills any lice that may have survived on any of her belongings.

Step 5: Partnering Together

We are committed to doing all we can to keep lice out of our community. We encourage you to have your child checked for head lice by a school nurse or pediatrician prior to camp. If any sign of head lice is found, please call your pediatrician to arrange for appropriate and immediate treatment well BEFORE your child leaves for camp and let us know that such treatment has taken place. However, remember that lice have a gestational period during which they are

invisible, therefore if your doctor says your daughter is all clear, they could still appear upon arrival at camp. If your child had head lice or was exposed to it (family member, friend, schoolmate, etc.) within four weeks of her arrival to camp, **please notify us**.

Our counseling staff is educated by the medical staff on how to check for and treat the lice, and the counselors will continue to educate the campers on preventing the spread of it.

We understand that many of you will have questions or want to contact us, and we welcome you to do so by phone or email. We are happy to answer your questions, and we encourage you to also read the websites given in this email and to consider purchasing a preventive shampoo.

Thank you for your understanding and your support in helping us have a lice-free summer at Alleghany! We know you understand that all of these efforts are being made solely in the best interest of the campers, so that they may have a stress-free summer that is not interrupted by lice treatments.

Yours truly,

Sam Dawson
Director
(540) 760-1026
Sam@campalleghany.com

and

Elizabeth Dawson Shreckhise
Assistant Director
(540) 490-0128
Elizabeth@campalleghany.com

Websites

- The Nit Fairies: www.thenitfairies.com
- ACA's educational site on lice: www.acacamps.org/knowledge/health/diseases/lice
- CDC: www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/
- Kids' Health: http://kidshealth.org/parent/infections/common/head_lice.html
- Mothers Against Head Lice: www.mothersagainstheadlice.org/