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September, 2015

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Welcome to the 'new year'-the new school year, that is! In this month's newsletter, we discuss two topics that make parents itch and squirm during the school year; pesky lice and heaps of homework! We hope all of your students have a productive and happy school year. We look forward to hearing about their academic and extracurricular achievements!

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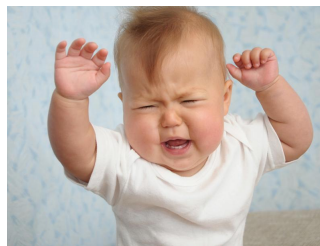
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Office Hours

Three Chopt Location
Monday - Friday

Hush Little Baby



As a new parent, your ears are attuned to every sound that your baby makes. The oos and aaaaas of cooing and the giggles you elicit are so enticing. The crying, however? Few things make new parents feel

more helpless than a crying infant they are unable to soothe. [Continue Reading](#)

Homework Help

Back to school means back to afternoons filled with papers, books and homework assignments. Homework is a reality for nearly every student from the early grades and becomes more involved in the later school years. Some students complete homework willingly with little assistance. Others may need incentives and supervision to get the job



7:30 A.M. - 7:30 P.M.
Saturday
9:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.

Bell Creek Location
Monday - Thursday
8:30 A.M. - 6:30 P.M.
Friday
8:30 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.

Billing Office
Monday - Friday
9:00 A.M. - 4:30 P.M.

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[To Learn More About Our Staff, Click Here](#)

Website Spotlight

Did you know you can download and fill out your child's school or sports physical form before coming to the office? [Click Here](#) to visit our forms page and scroll down to "School Forms". You can also access them via links on our Checkups and Vaccines page by [Clicking Here](#), where you can also see if your child needs any vaccines at their check-up.

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Itchy Issue

Heading back to school each year brings excitement and challenges. Unfortunately for some families, the start of the school year means your child is bringing home more than homework and forms for you to fill out. Infestations of lice are common during the school year, with approximately 6 to 12 million cases in the US reported every year. [Continue Reading](#)



Front Desk & Flu News

Flu Vaccine Update

It is time for flu vaccines again! Flu season is around the corner and it almost time to get your child's annual flu vaccine. As we start getting shipments in, we will send out an email letting people know that they can call to schedule a shot appointment. You may also check our website for updates. As in the past several years, the Center for Disease Control recommends that all children get immunized against the flu. Because the flu strains change each year, it is necessary to get a flu vaccine every year to protect against the strains of the flu for the current year. Below are a few reminders about the flu vaccine:

1. The flu vaccine is approved for 6 months and older.
2. If it is your child's first year getting the flu vaccine, he or she will need two doses of the flu vaccine at least 4 weeks apart.
3. If your child has only received one dose of flu vaccine in his or her life and is 8 years old or younger, he or she will need 2 doses of the flu vaccine 4 weeks apart as well.
4. The flu shot is approved for 6 months and older. The nasal flu vaccine (Flumist) is approved for ages 2 years to 49 years of age.
5. The Flumist is not recommended for children with uncontrolled asthma or other serious medical conditions. Those children should receive the flu shot.
6. For children with egg allergy, if the child's reaction is hives, they may receive the flu shot but not the Flumist. These children also must remain in our office for 30 minutes to ensure they do not have a reaction to the vaccine. Any child who has an anaphylactic response to the flu vaccine (respiratory distress, wheezing, vomiting, shock) cannot receive the flu vaccine.
7. For those children under 6 months of age or those who cannot receive a flu vaccine due to a medical condition or an allergy, it is recommended that the families and caregivers of those children are

vaccinated for the current season so as to best protect the child.

On-Line Bill Pay Now Available

We are pleased to announce that our new On-line Bill Pay module is available for all patients at no additional cost and is accessible through our website. You can make payments with your VISA, American Express, MasterCard, or Discover cards. For easy to follow instructions, [Click Here](#)

School & Sports Forms

We are now booking appointments through the month of December. If your child needs a physical for school or sports, please contact the Call Center at 804-282-4205 as soon as possible to schedule. Remember when scheduling these appointments to check with any school sports to ensure that the physical will be within the correct date range for participation. Please bring all forms (please include both the parent pages and the pages for the office to complete) to your child's visit, also remembering that we have a \$5.00 completion fee per form and require 3-5 days to complete them. You may either pick up your form at the office where you dropped it off or notify the front desk if you would like it mailed. Note that we do not fax forms. If you have any questions, please ask the front desk staff at the time of check-in.

Hush Little Baby (cont.)

Remember that crying serves a purpose for your infant. It is his or her way to communicate with you. It is a way to release tension. It helps shut out environmental sights and sounds that are over-stimulating. The average baby cries between one and four hours a day! Some variations may occur depending on your baby's temperament. You will quickly learn to differentiate the cry that means 'hunger' from the cry that means 'entertain me'. Crying helps to facilitate the attachment cycle with your infant. The baby cries to indicate a need, you step in to fill it, and the baby stops crying and relaxes. Remember that you can never spoil your newborn infant by responding to her cries or giving him attention.

Around 4 to 6 weeks of age, you may find that your newborn cries frequently and requires more soothing. This is because infants of this age spend more awake time than younger newborns do. They are also not yet capable of self-soothing, so they rely on you to calm and quiet them. This can often be a significant emotional and physical challenge for new parents who are adjusting to less nighttime sleep and more responsibilities during the day. It is important to remember that this stage is short. By the time infants reach 4 months, they are generally able to soothe themselves more easily.

When your infant cries, assess and meet the most pressing need first. Use your experience in recognizing the tone and intensity of the cry to help you figure out what is going wrong. Is she cold? Is he wet? Is it time to eat? Is she in pain? Once you have gone through your checklist and are assured that your little one is warm, dry and fed, but is still crying, you may become frustrated. Don't panic or feel tense. The more relaxed you remain, the more quickly your newborn will calm. There are many techniques that work well to soothe the fussy infant:

- Swaddle your infant in a large, thin receiving blanket with her arms close to her body. Infants like being contained.
- Sway gently or rock gently from side to side. This simulates the back and forth motion your infant is familiar with from the womb.
- Soft, rhythmic noises such as white noise machines, 'shushing' sounds by the parent, singing, talking or playing soft music
- Sucking, such as on a pacifier or your finger.
- Walking with your infant, in your arms, an infant carrier or a stroller.
- Infant massage

- Going for a ride in the car (be sure to properly restrain your infant!) The gentle vibration helps infants fall asleep.
- Settling your infant to sleep. If no other strategy works, sometimes just letting your newborn cry in a crib for a few minutes will allow them to relax and fall asleep. Most babies will cry for a few minutes before they fall asleep.

Remember that crying is one way your infant communicates with you. Don't take your newborn's crying personally! If you feel overwhelmed by your infant's crying, if you feel yourself becoming increasingly tense and irritable because of the crying, take a moment to step back from your infant. Get support from a family member or a friend. If at any time, responding to your newborn's cries feels like it is too much to handle or if you are unable to comfort your infant over a prolonged period of time, please contact our office for advice.

Homework Help (cont.)

Homework should be a priority for the afternoon, but does not always need to be completed right after a child walks in the door. Some children benefit from having time to unwind from the school day before getting in gear for homework. These kids may do well with a snack and 30 minutes of physical play before beginning a study session. Other children may quickly become distracted and hard to engage again if allowed too long a break between schoolwork and homework. For these kids, it may be best to unpack and get down to working.

Find a spot that is designated for homework. This location may be different depending on each individual child's temperament and motivations. Some children study best at a desk in a quiet bedroom. Others need to study where a parent can monitor, such as a kitchen table or counter top. Homework should be done in an environment that is as free of distractions as possible.

Assist your child in getting started on homework. Some children need help organizing their homework. Look over all that is to be done that night and list them all with your child. Help your child in breaking assignments into smaller parts that may seem less overwhelming. Have a calendar for bigger or long-range projects, with portions to be completed each day. This alleviates the stress of having to do a large assignment at the last minute.

A key strategy for a struggling student is to tackle the most dreaded assignment first. Some people call this strategy 'eat the frog', which comes from a saying by Mark Twain "If you eat a live frog first thing in the morning, nothing worse can happen to you for the rest of the day". If you get the worst, most daunting, most disliked homework out of the way, the rest will seem much easier.

Allow your child to take breaks in between assignments. Be sure these breaks are short and not too distracting. Stretching or taking a walk away from homework for a brief period may help your child recharge. Set a time limit on homework. If you feel your child has been working diligently for a long period of time without completing assignments, send a note to the teacher explaining the situation.

Be available for assistance, but avoid doing the homework for your child. For some families, the parent attempting to help with homework struggles leads to frustration for both the parent and the student. Have the phone number of a 'study buddy' that your child can call. Consider hiring a tutor for older kids or more difficult subjects. Check the homework for completion and understanding of the concept. However, it isn't necessary for your child to turn in a 'perfect' paper. Be sure to praise your child for their efforts.

Finally, ensure that all completed homework is organized and returned to a notebook or backpack for return to school. Nothing is more frustrating for students and parents than arriving to school with homework that has mysteriously vanished!!!

Itchy Issue (cont.)

Physicians and researchers have started to notice that there are now particular strains of these pesky bugs that are resistant to the popular over the counter treatments for lice. The most common active ingredient in over the counter medications, permethrin, disrupts the nervous system of live bugs, killing them. Some strains seem to have developed a genetic mutation that provides resistance. Scientists postulate that the overuse of these medications has contributed to this, much like the overuse of antibiotics contributes to antibiotic resistance.

Experts say that there is no need to panic. There are many treatments available for head lice, many by prescription. In addition, there are many strategies you can employ to ensure that your child does not get infected.

Head lice are tiny, crawling grey insects about the size of a sesame seed. They can live for about 28 days on a scalp, but will not survive more than one day if not on a person's scalp. They multiply very quickly, laying many

eggs per day and maturing from hatchling to adult in 12 days. Thus, if lice are not treated, they may become a persistent, itchy problem. Common symptoms that indicate that your child has lice include persistent itchiness or the scalp, a red and bumpy rash on the nape of the neck or around the ears at the hairline. It is important to be able to differentiate the nits, or egg sacs, from flakes due to dandruff, dust or hair product residue.

Head lice don't jump or fly. They spread by crawling from one head to the next during close contact. This is why they are most commonly found among preschool and elementary school aged children. Contrary to popular belief, having lice doesn't mean that a person has poor hygiene. In fact, lice are sometimes easier spread on clean scalps.

The best way to prevent head lice from infecting your family is to instruct your children on prevention strategies. Teach your kids not to share items such as brushes, combs, hats, headbands or other hair accessories. Lice are actually less likely to spread from the sharing of these personal items as they are directly from head to head. Encourage your kids to keep their heads from touching classmates' heads as they work and play. Keeping hair shorter or pulling back longer hair in ponytails or braids may help prevent the spread, as well.

Should your child become infected, our website has step-by-step instructions in how to proceed with eradication [Click Here to View](#) . If you find that over the counter treatments do not kill the lice within 48 hours, please contact our office for advice.

Commonly used prescription medications for lice include Malathion (Ovide), Benzyl Alcohol (Ulesfia), spinosad (Natroba) and ivermectin (Sklice). Malathion is applied to dry hair, left to air dry for 8 to 12 hours and then washed out. It is flammable, so hair dryers should not be used to dry the product on the hair. It is effective at killing both live bugs and eggs, but has an unpleasant odor. Benzyl Alcohol is approved for children over 6 months. It works by smothering the lice, but does not kill the eggs. It is applied to dry hair for 10 minutes before washing out. Treatment should be repeated in 10 days. Spinosad appears to kill both eggs and live insects. It is applied on the dry scalps of children 4 and over and rinsed 10 minutes later. It sometimes causes irritation of the scalp after application. Ivermectin disrupts the muscles of the louse, preventing them from feeding. Therefore, although it does not kill the eggs, the hatchlings do not survive. It is also applied to dry hair and scalp and rinsed after 10 minutes.

In concert with any over the counter or prescription medication, combing of the nits is highly effective. In addition, combing has the added benefit of time spent with your child, reassuring them that lice are common and that you know just how to handle them!

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