



# KNOW THE FACTS

## *Guidance for Handling Fleas in Schools*

Fleas are pests that feed on the blood of animals or people, which can cause itchy and irritated bites. Some types of fleas are known to transmit or spread diseases to both animals and people.

### **If You Think You Have Seen a Flea**

- Collect and keep it intact for proper identification. Use gloves, tweezers, tissue and seal in a bag.
- If it was on a student or their belongings, discretely remove the student from class but do not send them home or exclude them from school.
- Check the student's clothing and belongings for possible fleas.
- Inspect the area around where the flea was found.

### **Have a Positive Flea ID?**

- Consult the school's Integrated Pest Management Plan
- Oversee the case until the problem is resolved.
- Bag and seal any belongings of the student and send home at the end of the day.
- Inform student's guardians about the flea finding.
- Provide the student and parents with information on flea control.

### **What to Tell Parents**

- Having a flea infestation does not mean a home isn't clean.
- Students should limit the items they bring to school.
- Students should store school supplies in protective boxes at home and not under or near beds or couches or leave them in the school if possible.

### **Successful Flea Management**

- Uses a combination of strategies such as prevention, inspection, vacuuming, sweeping floors, steam/heat treatment, and, if needed, an exterminator.
- Recognizes that pesticides alone may not eliminate fleas.
- May include professional steam
- Possible flea treatment of classroom pets.
- Rodent management



### **General Guidance**

- Ensure all school faculty and staff are able to identify flea, flea "dirt" / feces and eggs. Flea dirt looks like small dark brown specks.
- Ensure addressing fleas is included in the Integrated Pest Management Plan.
- Whenever possible, provide space that students are able to keep their belongings separated from those of other students.

### **Flea Hot Spots in Schools**

- Student and staff closets, lockers, coats, clothing, and backpacks.
- Faculty lounges, classrooms or other areas with cushioned furniture or cots.
- Dormitories or other sleeping areas.
- Cracks and crevices in floors.

**Finding a confirmed flea on a student or their belongings does not necessarily mean their home is infested.**

**If a student has fleas, privately and with dignity, follow these guidelines.**

**For more information:**

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<https://www.cdc.gov/fleas/site.html#find-information>

or

SCAN



# School Response Flowchart

Flea found on/in:

Student's clothing/belongings

- Discretely bring student to school nurse.
- Examine clothes and belongings.
- Collect specimen to identify.

- Notify student's parents or guardians.
- Provide educational material on fleas.

Evidence of infestation at home.

- Encourage family to treat for infestation
- Provide educational assistance

If there are repeat instances, enlist appropriate social agencies.

No evidence of infestation at home.

Investigate for other sources.

Classroom/Environment

Trained pest management professional inspects for fleas.

Evidence of infestation.

- Follow IPM plan and treat for infestation
- Notify staff and parents of findings and treatment.

No evidence of infestation.

Monitor and maintain vigilance.

*Information sheet adapted from information obtained from the CDC, Cleveland Clinic, EPA and Harvard Health Publishing*