

# Preventing Skin Infections In Wrestlers



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To properly control skin infections in wrestling requires active participation from coaches, parents and the athletes. The first basic principle is Hygiene. Every wrestler and parent needs to focus on cleanliness both at home and in the wrestling room.

Mats should be cleaned before each practice. Skin checks should be performed at the beginning of each practice by a coach, Certified Athletic Trainer or someone trained in recognizing skin infections. Anyone with a suspicious lesion should refrain from competing until evaluated and cleared by their Health Care Provider. ***Refrain from 'Doctor Shopping.' That only serves as a means to promote misdiagnosis and further spreading the infection.***

Finally, each team should seek the help of one Health Care Provider who will help them in coordinating treatment of these skin infections. Their close association with a team will help reduce the presence of these infections in the wrestling room and their spread amongst these athletes.

### Hygienic Principles that will Help Minimize Skin Infections

- 1) Shower immediately after each practice or competition (*At facility, NOT AT HOME!*). If not practical, consider cleansing the skin with soap-and-water body wipes. Use your own bottled soap and towel and don't share them with others, let alone other toiletries.
- 2) Don't perform cosmetic shaving. Needless shaving of the chest or legs or genital areas have been associated with increased outbreaks of Methicillin-Resistant Staph aureus (MRSA). Consider cropping or closely trimming the areas if necessary.
- 3) Wash work-out clothing after each practice using detergent and hot water in a washing machine. Use a mechanical dryer set on hot heat to dry all clothing. Consider washing smaller pads (for knees or elbows) on a weekly basis in a similar fashion. More frequently if soiled with blood or bodily fluids.
- 4) Don't use a whirlpool or cold tub with any open wounds, scrapes or scratches. Shower before using whirlpools or common tubs.
- 5) Perform Skin Checks before daily practices and competitive events.
- 6) Wear long sleeve sweat shirt and sweat pants during practice. Consider leggings during competition. Less exposed skin means less chance of contracting a skin infection.

**Recognize. Treat. Prevent.**

**RECOGNITION is the first means to control!**



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