



# MRSA STAPH INFECTION

## STAPH IS MORE COMMON THAN YOU THINK.

Hospital and other healthcare institutions have long been aware of the dangers associated with staph infections. Staph, which occurs naturally on the skin in more than 25% of the population can cause infections that are difficult to treat and highly contagious. In the recent past, it has become more apparent that staph infections can and often do, proliferate in athletic settings. Skin to skin contact, moist environments and the potential for scrapes and abrasions, make athletes a prime target for staph infection. Recently, **Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA)** which is an antibiotic resistant form of staph, has been profiled as causing infections in major athletic teams as well as local schools. MRSA is of particular concern as it is highly contagious, extremely difficult to treat, and can have serious or even deadly consequences.

### **Our goal is to prevent infections before they happen.**

To ensure the health of your athlete during participation in sports activities, please review the simple steps on the below to protect you, your family and your athlete.

#### ATHLETES:

- Practice good hygiene, including showering with soap, following all practices and competitions.
- Report any injuries, particularly open wounds, to athletic trainers and/or coaches.
- Wash hands regularly to help remove bacteria before it causes problems.
- Do not share personal items like towels, clothing or razors.
- **Cover ALL wounds** with an antimicrobial dressing (even small ones) during and after activity. Covered wounds heal faster.

#### PARENTS:

- Encourage good hygiene, including clean clothing, showering and frequent hand washing.
- Do not share personal items; i.e., towels, clothing, razors, etc.
- **Keep wounds covered** with an antimicrobial dressing at all times as infections can spread, even at home.
- Monitor any wounds at home. Report any abnormalities or concerns to a doctor, carefully following any treatment plan.

*Your team Athletic Trainers and Coaches are also implementing strategies like the ones listed below to help reduce the threat of infections. Your support can make a difference.*

#### ATHLETIC TRAINERS & COACHES:

- Encourage reporting of all injuries or open wounds and assess each incident.
- Clean and cover all wounds. Use of dressings that inhibit the growth or transmission of microbes can reduce the spread of infection.
- Ensure availability of soap and hot water.
- Require showering with soap and water after ALL practices and competitions.
- Establish routine cleaning of facility, mats and other shared equipment.
- Discourage sharing of personal items (towels, clothing and equipment).
- Train athletes and staff in first aid for wounds and recognition of wounds that are potentially infected.

A number of recent articles touching upon staph infections and MRSA have been surfacing in the news which are applicable to not only the hospital setting but also to our local communities. This abbreviated list can start your research, but please also explore other websites such as [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) and [www.nata.org](http://www.nata.org) for additional information.

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This prevention program is sponsored by Covidien. For additional information, please see the following websites:

[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)      [www.covidien.com](http://www.covidien.com)      [www.nata.org](http://www.nata.org)  
[www.kendallamd.com](http://www.kendallamd.com)      [www.strikeoutinfection.com](http://www.strikeoutinfection.com)



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