

# Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA)

## Recommendations for Schools and Athletic Programs

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### General Recommendations for Prevention for the Spread of MRSA in Schools:

- Avoid unnecessary antibiotic use. Antibiotic overuse causes antibiotic resistance.
- Keep your hands clean by washing thoroughly with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid sharing personal and skin care items such as clothing, towels, washcloths, razors or lotions and balms.
- Keep cuts and scrapes clean and covered with a bandage until healed. Avoid contact with other people's wounds or bandages, and wash hands immediately after changing a bandage.
- Seek medical attention immediately if a wound does not heal properly or appears to be infected.
- MRSA is spread by people and shared personal items. It is not spread through the walls and floor of the school building. Schools do not need to be closed to control the spread of MRSA. Routine cleaning of frequently-touched surfaces, bathrooms, locker rooms, kitchens, classrooms and other shared areas is recommended according to usual procedures. Use an EPA-registered disinfectant effective against MRSA.
- People with MRSA or other skin infections can go to work or school if their wound is covered and the drainage is contained.

### Recommended Practices for Treating Athletes with Skin Infections

- Use standard precautions, including hand hygiene before and after contact and after removing gloves, when caring for non-intact skin or possible infections.
- If hands are not visibly dirty and no sinks are available for hand washing (for example, while on the field) alcohol-based hand rubs and sanitizers can be used to improve hand hygiene.
- Ensure infected wounds on athletes are properly covered.
- Encourage athletes to cover acute, non-infected wounds (e.g., abrasions, blisters, lacerations) until healed to prevent infection.

### Excluding Athletes with MRSA Infection from Participation

- If sport-specific rules do not exist, in general, athletes should be excluded if wounds cannot be properly covered during participation.
  - The term "properly covered" means that the skin infection is covered by a securely attached bandage or dressing that will contain all drainage and will remain intact throughout the activity. If wounds can be properly covered, good hygiene

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measures should be stressed to the athlete such as performing hand hygiene before and after changing bandages and throwing used bandages in the trash.

- A healthcare provider might exclude an athlete if the activity poses a risk to the health of the infected athlete (such as injury to the infected area), even though the infection can be properly covered.
- Athletes with active infections or open wounds should not use whirlpools or therapy pools not cleaned between athletes and other common-use water facilities like swimming pools until infections and wounds are healed

General information about MRSA can be found at

[http://www.dhr.wv.gov/oeps/disease/IBD\\_VPD/IBD/Pages/MRSA.aspx](http://www.dhr.wv.gov/oeps/disease/IBD_VPD/IBD/Pages/MRSA.aspx)

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