

## Simple Steps to Help Prevent MRSA Infections

- Practice good hygiene  
Shower thoroughly with soap and water as soon as possible after all practices and games. Wash hands frequently with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Wash hands when they are visibly dirty.
- Do not share towels, soap, or other personal items  
Clothing, razors, equipment, towels, and even bars of soap can become contaminated and may spread disease. Launder clothes in hot water, and dry in a hot dryer.
- Clean equipment after each use  
Equipment should be cleaned with commercial disinfectant or a solution of bleach and water (1 tablespoon of bleach to 1 quart of water).
- Cover wounds completely with clean bandages until healed  
Soiled dressings should be disposed of properly. Wash hands before and after changing bandages.
- Avoid contact with other people's wounds or bandages

# Sports and Community-acquired MRSA



### Infection Prevention

1320 West Main Street  
Newark, Ohio 43055  
Phone: (220) 564-4153



Licking Memorial  
Hospital

LMHealth.org

1945-5025  
03/28/2022



# What is MRSA?

## What is MRSA?

An increasing number of outbreaks of skin infections within sports teams, caused by *Staphylococcus aureus* (staph) bacteria that are resistant to many antibiotics, have been reported. These resistant strains of staph are known as MRSA (methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*).

**Anyone who has regular, physical contact with other people is at a high risk for acquiring MRSA. However, MRSA infections are easily prevented.**

## How does staph harm a person?

Most of the time, staph is carried in the nose or on the skin and does not cause infection. When it does, it usually causes minor infections, such as boils or abscesses. However, sometimes staph can cause more serious infections such as pneumonia, joint and bloodstream infections. Staph infections often begin when staph bacteria enter the body through an injury to the skin. **Symptoms of a staph skin infection include redness, warmth, swelling, tenderness of the skin, and boils or blisters.**

## How do staph skin infections spread?

Staph is spread through skin-to-skin contact.

A person also can contract staph by touching a shared item or surface. Examples of commonly shared items are towels, benches in saunas or hot tubs, and athletic equipment. In other words, anything that could have touched the skin of a person infected with staph can carry the bacteria to the skin of another person.

## What can be done to prevent infection among athletes?

Athletes should clean their hands and skin often, avoid skin-to-skin contact with anyone suspected of having a staph skin infection, and not share personal items, such as razors or towels, with anyone. Items that are shared with other people, such as weights, helmets, and other athletic equipment, should be cleaned before being used by another person.

## What should coaches do if they think that an athlete has a skin infection?

Have the athlete consult a healthcare provider as soon as possible. Early treatment can help prevent the infection from getting worse. The athlete should follow all directions that the healthcare provider gives, including taking all doses of any prescribed antibiotic.

## When to contact a healthcare provider

Tell your parents, coach, or school nurse about any wound that may be infected. Visit a healthcare provider if there is concern about any wound.

## Learn more about MRSA

Additional information is available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at [CDC.gov](http://CDC.gov) and [LMHealth.org](http://LMHealth.org).

## Contact us

For more information about MRSA and how to stop the spread of the infection, contact the Infection Prevention Director at (220) 564-4153.

