



Mt. Lebanon School District
Health Services Department

**A Quick Reference Guide for Coaches to prevent the spread of MRSA
and other infections among Athletes**

- Coaches will use **Universal Precautions** and appropriate first aid when caring for athletes. Universal precautions is the practice of treating all human blood and body fluids as if they are known to be infected with bloodborne pathogens (HIV, Hepatitis B virus, MRSA, etc.). Always wear disposable gloves when contact with blood or body fluids is possible.
- Coaches will communicate with trainers, parents and school nurses about any concern of a skin infection. An appropriate referral to the athlete's physician will be made as necessary.

Please use the following guidelines to reduce the spread of infection,
including MRSA, among athletes.

- Athletes are instructed to follow good hygiene practices.
- Athletes are instructed to wash hands frequently: after sneezing, blowing or touching nose, after using the toilet, before and after a game/practice, after changing bandages or touching infected skin or open wound. Athletes are reminded to sneeze and cough into elbow in an effort to contain body fluids.
- Athletes are instructed to shower immediately after each practice or competition.
- Athletes are instructed not to share personal items: towels, washcloths, equipment, razors, topical ointments, antibiotics, salves, etc.
- Athletes are instructed not to share drink containers on the sidelines during the game or practice.
- Athletes are reminded to avoid touching face, nose or groin during a practice or game. (areas where bacteria can be colonized)
- Athletes are instructed to take home in a mesh bag and wash daily: practice uniforms, towels, and any other laundry in hot water and detergent and dry on the hot cycle of a clothes dryer.
- Athletes are encouraged to refrain from cosmetic shaving (to avoid skin cuts/rashes).
- Athletes are instructed to refrain from the use of the whirlpool when a cut, abrasion, skin rash, etc., is present.

- Athletes are encouraged to wear work-out clothing (short sleeve tee shirt) that minimizes skin contact with benches and equipment in weight/exercise room.
- Athletes are instructed to report any skin rash, boil, abrasion, spider bite, wound or turf burn, etc., promptly to the athletic trainer, coach, school nurse and parent.
- Athletes are instructed in symptoms of a skin infection: tenderness, pain, swelling, redness, pus, area is warm to touch, may have a fever, may look like a spider bite, blister, impetigo, abscess, or boil.
- Athletes are instructed in home care and treatment of a bacterial wound infection:
 - Consult your doctor.
 - Tell your doctor that you are an athlete (a wound culture should be taken).
 - Take all antibiotics as prescribed by your doctor, even if the infection seems to have healed.
 - Inform your doctor, trainer and parent if the wound is not improving.
 - Keep the wound covered and taped on all 4 sides at all times until completely healed.
 - Bring a doctor's note to the trainer indicating your diagnosis and treatment plan.

- Athletes are instructed to wipe off equipment (weights, belts, etc) in weight room between each use with disposable sanitizing cloths.
- Athletes are provided enough personal space during films, etc. in an effort to avoid contact with contaminated clothing, etc.
- Athletes are instructed to use alcohol hand sanitizer to wash their hands when entering and leaving the locker/weight room/trainer's room.
- Infection control messages should be repeated regularly (i.e., weekly) and following any observed violation. Rewards for compliance (as well as potential penalties for non compliance) may help to reinforce appropriate behaviors.
- Visual aids (i.e., posters) should be present and strategically placed to remind athletes, staff and parents regarding proper behaviors.