

# HEALTH INFORMATION SHEET VOLUSIA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

## GUIDELINES FOR PREVENTING SKIN INFECTIONS AMONG ATHLETIC TEAMS

### WHAT IS MRSA?

Staphylococcus aureus (commonly called "staph") is a germ (bacteria) that can cause infection of the skin like pimples, boils or "spider bites". Staph bacteria are one of the most common causes of skin infections as well as pneumonia, surgical wound infections and blood stream infections. Some staph bacteria, MRSA (methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus), are resistant to certain antibiotics and makes the infection difficult to treat. Staph infections, including MRSA, are most commonly spread through direct physical contact with an infected person. Transmission can also occur through contact with objects/surfaces that have become contaminated with MRSA. The occurrence of MRSA is on the rise in Florida as well as nationwide. Over the past several years, MRSA has become a concern among the athletic community, especially among participants of close contact sports. Clusters of MRSA infections have occurred among wrestlers, football players and even fencers.

### WHAT CAN I DO TO PREVENT STAPH INFECTIONS?

This document provides recommendations for preventing the occurrence and spread of staph and MRSA infections among athletic teams. Coaches, parents, athletes, referees and others involved in sporting events should become familiar with the signs and symptoms of infection and are encouraged to adhere to the following recommendations:

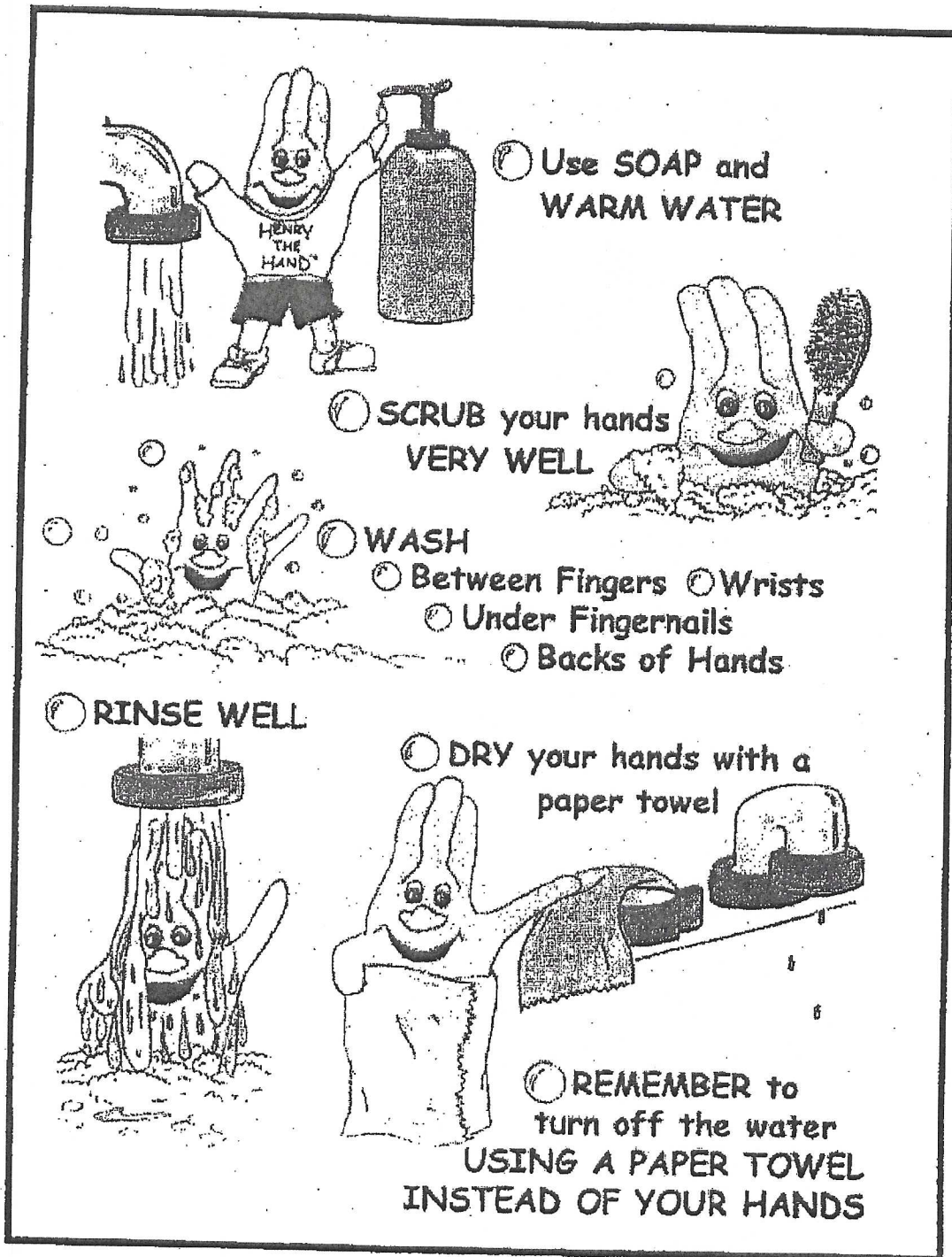
#### **ATHLETES SHOULD:**

- Shower daily with soap and warm water, especially after practice events and competitions
- Wash hands with soap and warm water frequently. If proper hand washing facilities are not available, a waterless, alcohol based hand sanitizer is an acceptable alternative
- Do not share personal items with others. Personal items include, but are not limited to: sporting equipment, clothes, towels, razors and uniforms
- Clean all shared sporting and protective equipment between uses. Use an appropriate disinfectant used according to the manufacturer's instructions
- Wash clothes and linens in hot water, soap and bleach (if available)
- Dry clothes and linens in a hot dryer; heat helps kill the bacteria
- Cover all wounds, particularly those that may be draining (wet), with a clean, dry bandage at all times
- Do not lance, pop or drain boils, wounds or other skin infections
- See a healthcare provider immediately if a skin infection develops
- Avoid participating in contact sporting events until wounds/skin infections are healed

It is essential for coaches, athletes, parents and other sporting event officials to enforce the recommendations described above. Strict adherence will help prevent the spread of MRSA infections among the athletic community.

For further information, visit [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) or contact the Volusia County Health Department, Epidemiology Program at (386) 274-0651

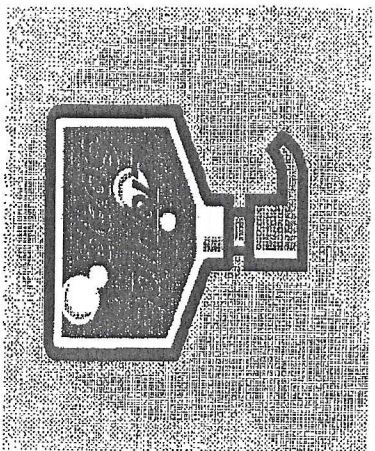
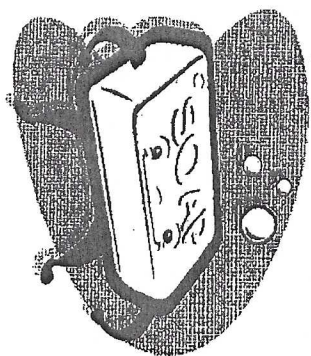
# Henry the Hand's Hand Washing Instructions



Henry the Hand Copyright 1999 Dr. William P. Sawyer ©

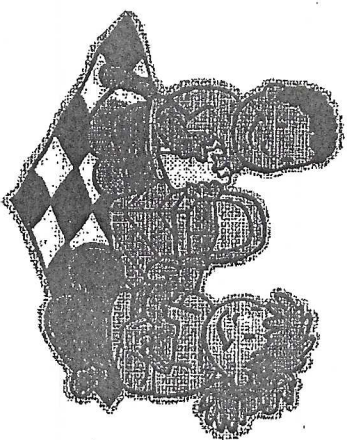
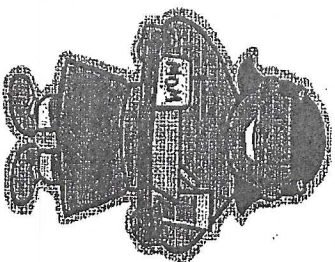
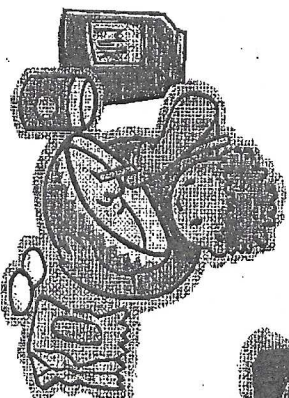
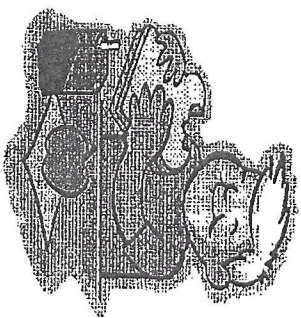


# Always Wash Your Hands



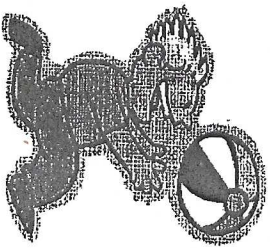
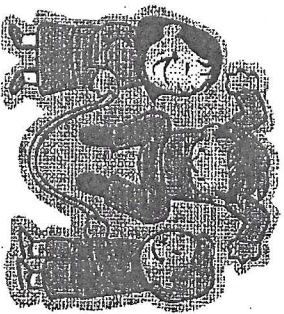
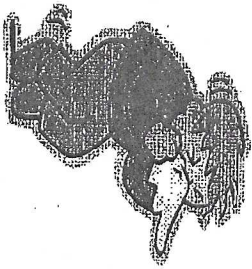
**Wash your hands before  
touching or eating food  
in a...**

- Cafeteria
- Classroom
- Home
- Restaurant

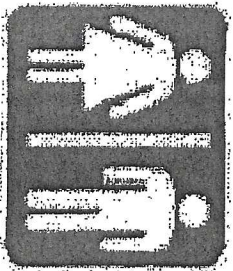




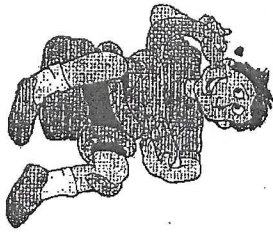
# **Wash your hands after...**



- **Coughing**
- **Sneezing**
- **Recess**
- **Bathroom break**



# Wash your hands after touching a ...

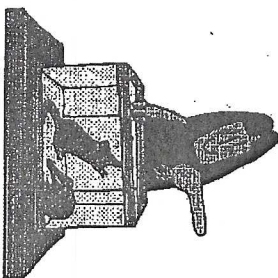
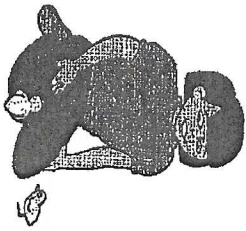
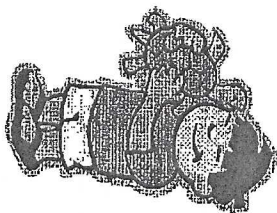
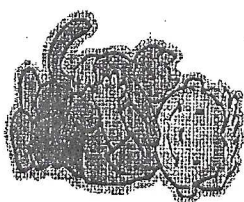
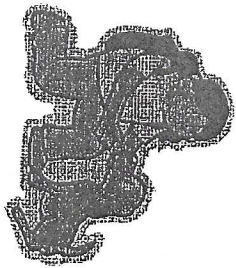


• Dog

• Cat

• Pet

• Creature



# Wash your hands after touching...

- School books
- Money
- Backpacks
- Computers
- Other items

