

NYSDOH Recommendations to Prevent CA-MRSA

Wound Care

- Cuts or other abrasions on the skin should be washed with soap and water and covered with dry, sterile bandages.
- Keep all wounds covered. A clean dressing should be applied every day until healed.
- All wounds should be cared for while wearing gloves.
- Soiled dressings should be handled with gloves and disposed of after handling.
- Wash hands frequently before and after exposure to contaminated persons and equipment.

Prevention Strategies

- Coaches and trainers should always use gloves when attending to an athlete's wounds. Before and after performing care, hands should be either washed with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizers.
- Assess skin regularly for any lesions. Refer athletes with wounds to appropriate health care personnel and assure little to no contact to other players.
- Learn to recognize wounds that could be potentially infectious.
- Launder personal items, such as towels, and clean sports equipment frequently, ideally after each use.
- Encourage school nurse participation at the beginning of every season to teach players how to recognize skin infections.
- If an infection is identified, involve appropriate personnel, such as the school

nurse, administration and parents to take proper precautions in avoiding the spreading of the infection.

- Report any clusters of athletes with skin infections to your local health department.

For additional information on MRSA, visit:

New York State Department of Health
www.nyhealth.gov

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
www.cdc.gov



A Guide for Coaches: Preventing the Spread of Bacteria Among Your Athletes

Information in this brochure has been adapted from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a division of the Department of Health and Human Services

State of New York
Eliot Spitzer, Governor
Department of Health
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A Guide for Coaches

Preventing the Spread of Bacteria Among Your Athletes

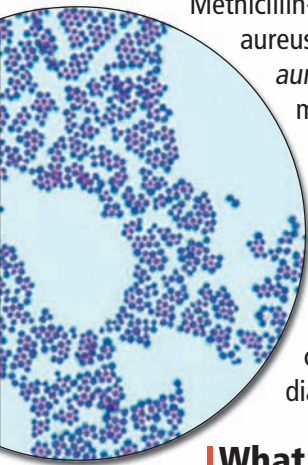


What is *Staphylococcus aureus*?

Staphylococcus aureus (*S. aureus*) is a bacteria commonly found on the skin and in the nose of 20-30 percent of healthy individuals. This bacteria often causes skin infections, but can also cause other more serious infections, such as pneumonia or bloodstream infections.

What is MRSA?

Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) is a strain of *S. aureus* that is resistant to methicillin, an antibiotic in the same class as penicillin. MRSA is traditionally seen in people recently hospitalized or who **have been** treated at a health care facility, such as a dialysis center.



What is CA-MRSA?

Community-associated MRSA (CA-MRSA) infections are considered to be community-associated because they occur in people who have not been hospitalized or had a medical procedure, such as dialysis or surgery, within the past year.

CA-MRSA infections have been documented among athletes, prisoners, military recruits, day care attendees, injection drug users, and others who live in crowded settings or routinely share contaminated items.

What does a CA-MRSA skin infection look like?

A skin infection with CA-MRSA can begin as a reddened area on the skin, or resemble a pimple that can develop into a skin abscess or boil causing fever, pus, swelling or pain.

CA-MRSA skin infections can be treated by a health care professional by incising, draining, and locally caring for the wound. Antibiotics may be administered as necessary. These infections can progress to a more serious and difficult-to-treat stage if not treated properly and promptly.

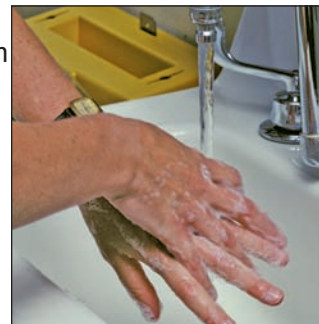
It is also possible for a pre-existing cut, turfburn or other irritated area on the skin to develop an infection with CA-MRSA if the area is not kept clean and dry.



Infection site: ankle
May be mistaken for spider bites

How is CA-MRSA spread?

CA-MRSA is spread through person-to-person contact or contact with contaminated items such as towels, razors, uniforms and athletic equipment. Poor hygiene practices help facilitate the spread of the bacteria.



How can CA-MRSA skin infections be prevented on MY Team?

Both the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have identified CA-MRSA as a potential problem among athletes. The NCAA recommends practicing good personal hygiene and avoiding contact with infected areas to prevent the transmission of CA-MRSA.

Role as an Educator

- Encourage athletes who participate in sports involving contact (football, wrestling, etc.) to shower with soap as soon as possible after practices and competitions.
- Athletes who share equipment are encouraged to regularly clean this equipment with commercial disinfectants or a solution of one tablespoon of bleach in one quart water.
- Encourage players not to share towels or other personal items such as uniforms or equipment.
- Educate players on the importance of wound care and hand hygiene.

Role as an Administrator

- Ensure availability of adequate soap and hot water.
- Establish routine cleaning schedules for shared equipment, such as towels, uniforms, helmets, athletic equipment and mats.
- If a player has a wound that cannot be covered adequately, consider excluding the player from practice or competitions until the wound can be covered or has completely healed.