



## GUIDE TO MRSA INFECTION

**Staph** is a type of bacteria. It may cause skin infections that look like pimples or boils. Skin infections caused by **Staph may be red, swollen, painful, or have pus** or other drainage. Some Staph (known as Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus or MRSA) are resistant to certain antibiotics, making it harder to treat.

Anyone can get a Staph infection. People are more likely to get a Staph. As the parent of a student-athlete, you'd do anything to keep your child safe. When it comes to preventing MRSA, a potentially serious bacterial infection, a few common-sense preventative measures can make a big difference.

Here are some ways to help your child avoid the risks of MRSA:

- **Laundry workout** clothing/uniforms after each use using hot water and detergent.
- **Make sure your child does not share equipment.** If your child brings his or her equipment home, designate a place where it can thoroughly dry out after each use. Wet padding and other equipment left in a gym bag creates an ideal environment for MRSA bacteria to grow.
- Encourage frequent **hand washing** with antibacterial soap. Clean hands are a key defense against the spread of infection.
- Tell your child to **shower immediately** after practice or competition, especially if he or she participates in a contact sport.
- Any time your child has a **skin wound**, make sure it remains **covered** until it is fully healed. MRSA usually enters the body through an unprotected break in the skin.
- Make sure your child **reports all skin wounds**, no matter how minor, to a coach, athletic trainer, school nurse, or someone else who can decide whether medical attention is warranted. If it's infected with MRSA, early detection is critical.

Here are some warning signs to look for and ask about when deciding whether a wound requires medical intervention:

- Longer than normal healing time
- Any increase in size
- Unexplained or unusual pain or sensitivity
- The presence of pus or a pustule
- Induration (hardness)
- The sensation of heat
- Abnormal swelling or redness
- Red streaks around the lesion
- Abnormal coloration