

Personal Hygiene – prevent infection before it begins

Perhaps the most important step for preventing skin infections is to maintain stellar personal hygiene before, during, and after exercise. Here are key tips that will help prevent infection the following skin infections common to wrestlers:

- Ringworm
- Impetigo / Bacterial Staph
- Herpes Simplex – Gladiatorum

BEFORE PRACTICE

- Respect the wrestling room – store all personal belongings in school locker or secure location free of dust and/or grime.
- Respect your personal belongings – keep Lysol disinfectant spray at school. Frequently (1x weekly) spray down your gym locker with disinfectant to prevent growth of bacteria.

DURING PRACTICE

- Wear socks to and from the wrestling room. Remove shoes whenever leaving the wrestling room, especially when going to the restroom.
- Utilize disinfectant wipes within the room. Any time you or your training partner experiences a cut or scrape, use antimicrobial wipes to clean irritated skin. This should take **NO LONGER** than one minute to do in real time; **DO NOT** delay practice.

AFTER PRACTICE

- Bring a clean towel, a shower sponge or wash cloth, antimicrobial soap (Defense Soap), and shampoo (Head & Shoulders) to every practice.
- Shower **IMMEDIATELY** after practice. When you sweat your skin pores open, allowing bacteria to infiltrate your skin. Within fifteen minutes after practice (whenever you stop sweating or expose your skin to cold air) your pores close again, locking in the bacteria. You must shower within 15 minutes after practice. Use antimicrobial soap and sponge (applying soap to skin with hands is **NOT** as effective) and showering in warm water for 4-5 minutes will maximize your chances of removing all bacteria from skin.
- Disinfect your shoes and headgear after every practice. Lysol wipes or sprays work effectively. Air out shoes and headgear outside or in open air area.
- **Put your dirty clothes & kneepads in the laundry within an hour of completing practice. If you wait more than 24 hours to wash your clothes, bacteria can spread to the fabric of your clothes and survive the wash cycle. At this point (even if you wash your clothes in the future) the bacteria will survive the wash cycle and invade your skin the moment you put the article of clothing on.**
- Wrap your dirty clothes in your used towel following shower. Carry towel in your hands; **DO NOT** put dirty towel and/or clothing in your gym bag unless you plan to wash your bag along with your dirty clothes. Bacteria can spread in your bag just as easily as your gym locker if you use it to store dirty clothing.