

MEMO TO MEMBER SCHOOLS

AIA Wrestling Sectional Tournaments Postponed

PHOENIX, AZ (Feb. 7, 2014) – It has come to the attention of the Arizona Interscholastic Association (AIA) that a number of wrestlers have contracted a skin infection. It is important to note that none have been reported to be MRSA.

Due to the number of wrestlers reported with a skin infection, the AIA, as a precautionary measure, is postponing the AIA Sectional Wrestling Tournaments until further notice, originally scheduled to take place on Saturday, Feb. 8.

Additionally, when competition resumes, any athlete with a suspicious skin lesion will not be permitted to participate in competition; furthermore, the mats will be disinfected between matches.

It is the recommendation of the AIA Sports Medicine Advisory Committee to follow the USA wrestling and CDC guidelines regarding infectious disease. Again, this is not determined to be MRSA; however, we are treating them with extra precautions to prevent further skin infections, postponing competition, and encourage athletes that have a suspicious skin lesion to consult with their physician and seek treatment before exposing themselves to other people.

The AIA recognizes the disruption this may cause to family's schedules and preparation for competition, but the AIA is focused on the health of all of its athletes.

More information will be made available at a later time. It is anticipated the AIA will have an update as to the progress and logistics of the sectional and state wrestling tournaments by close of business Monday.

The following is the USA wrestling guidelines in the event of a single case of MRSA.

How should athletic facilities be managed when an MRSA infection occurs?

- Athletic facilities such as locker rooms should always be kept clean whether or not MRSA infections have occurred among the athletes.
- Review cleaning procedures and schedules with the janitorial/environmental service staff.
 - Cleaning procedures should focus on commonly touched surfaces and surfaces that come into direct contact with people's bare skin each day.
 - Cleaning with detergent-based cleaners or Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) - registered detergents/disinfectants will remove MRSA from surfaces.
 - Cleaners and disinfectants, including household chlorine bleach, can be irritating and exposure to these chemicals has been associated with health problems such as asthma and skin and eye irritation.
 - Take appropriate precautions described on the product's label instructions to reduce exposure. Wearing personal protective equipment such as gloves and eye protection may be indicated.
 - Follow the instruction labels on all cleaners and disinfectants, including household chlorine bleach, to make sure they are used safely and correctly.

- Some key questions that should be answered by reading the label include:
 - How should the cleaner or disinfectant be applied?
 - Do you need to clean surface first before using the disinfectant (e.g., precleaned surfaces)?
 - Is it safe for the surface? Some cleaners and disinfectants, including household chlorine bleach, might damage some surfaces (e.g., metals, some plastics).
 - How long do you need to leave it on the surface to be effective (i.e., contact time)?
 - Do you need to rinse the surface with water after using the cleaner or disinfectant?
- If you are using household chlorine bleach, check the label to see if the product has specific instructions for disinfection. If no disinfection instructions exist, then use ¼ cup of regular household bleach in 1 gallon of water (a 1:100 dilution equivalent to 500- 615 parts per million [ppm] of available chlorine) for disinfection of pre-cleaned surfaces.
- Environmental cleaners and disinfectants should not be put onto to skin or wounds and should never be used to treat infections.
- The EPA provides a list of registered products that work against MRSA (List H): <http://epa.gov/oppad001/chemregindex.htm>
- There is a lack of evidence that large-scale use (e.g., spraying or fogging rooms or surfaces) of disinfectants will prevent MRSA infections.
- Repair or dispose of equipment and furniture with damaged surfaces that do not allow surfaces to be adequately cleaned.
- Covering infections will greatly reduce the risks of surfaces becoming contaminated with MRSA.

How should sports equipment be cleaned?

- Equipment, such as helmets and protective gear, should be cleaned according to the equipment manufacturers' instructions to make sure the cleaner will not harm the item.
- Shared equipment should be cleaned after each use and allowed to dry.

The CDC also has guidelines for prevention and management of MRSA infections and a facilities response: <http://www.cdc.gov/mrsa/community/team-hc-providers/index.html>

Should athletes with MRSA skin infections be excluded from participation?

- If sport-specific rules do not exist, in general, athletes should be excluded if wounds cannot be properly covered during participation.
 - The term “properly covered” means that the skin infection is covered by a securely attached bandage that will contain all drainage and will remain intact throughout the activity. If wounds can be properly covered, good hygiene measures should be stressed to the athlete such as performing hand hygiene before and after changing bandages and throwing used bandages in the trash.
- A healthcare provider might exclude an athlete if the activity poses a risk to the health of the infected athlete (such as injury to the infected area), even though the infection can be properly covered.
- Athletes with active infections or open wounds should not use whirlpools or therapy pools not cleaned between athletes and other common-use water facilities like swimming pools until infections and wounds are healed.

What should I do if I notice an athlete with a possible infection?

- Refer athletes with possible infections to a healthcare provider such as team physician, athletic trainer, school nurse, or primary care doctor.

- If the athlete is less than 18 years old, notify parents/guardians of the athlete with the possible infection.
- Educate athletes on ways to prevent spreading the infection.
- Using the criteria above, consider excluding the athlete from participation until evaluated by a healthcare provider.