

GUIDELINES TO REDUCE SKIN CONDITIONS



The following guidelines are not meant to be all inclusive of what may need to be done to prevent skin conditions from occurring in wrestling. They provide practical suggestions that should help reduce the incidence of skin conditions. Above all, restricting wrestlers with skin lesions from participation and keeping a clean wrestling environment are the keys to reducing the incidence of skin infections.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Clean wrestling mats at least once a day with a disinfectant cleaner*, preferably within one hour of practice or competition. Allow mats to air dry before using. There is great benefit from cleaning mats before and after practice. *(Disinfectant cleaners used should state they are effective against viruses, fungi, and bacteria. Typically, the label will state the cleaner is bactericidal, fungicidal, & virucidal. Follow the label directions closely for the best effectiveness. *A 1:100 solution of household bleach and water (1/4 cup bleach per gallon of water) is an excellent disinfectant cleaner, however, it may cause skin rashes. It should be mixed fresh daily and stored in a dark colored container. 70% Isopropyl alcohol is also an excellent disinfectant cleaner.*
- Wash wall mats with a disinfectant cleaner on a regular basis (1-2 times weekly).
- Wipe weight room benches with a disinfectant cleaner after use and/or prior to the next day's use.
- Don't allow any wrestling into the practice room without clean practice gear! Launder towels (including wash cloths), practice gear, and uniforms after each use. Use detergent containing bleach or dry all articles in a dryer.
- Wipe head gear and shoes with a disinfectant cleaner after each practice.
- Do not allow wrestlers to share any item of practice gear or towels.
- Require each wrestler to shower after each practice and contest, scrubbing vigorously with an antibacterial or deodorant soap. Consider providing liquid soap. If this is not possible, do not allow wrestlers to share bars of soap.
- Have each wrestler supply their own soap and shampoo or have dispensers containing liquid soap available.
- Athletes with acne problems may wish to use astringent pads to clean their face and neck, or other affected areas, after showering.
- Open doors to the wrestling room each night and use fans to lower the heat and humidity. Proper ventilation is very important to destroy disease causing organisms, especially those causing fungal conditions, such as ringworm.
- Do not allow athletes to use common towels for any reason, including at MAT SIDE.
- Wrestlers should not put dirty practice clothes in the same gym bag in which they carry clean practice clothes to school. This may contaminate the bag and, therefore, the clean clothes.
- Neoprene sleeves and supports should be wiped with a disinfectant cleaner after every use and be allowed to air dry.
- Wrestlers should boost their natural immunity to all diseases by eating healthy foods and getting adequate rest.

- Coaches should talk with wrestlers, and their parents, about how to recognize and prevent the most common skin diseases.
- Wrestlers who have been susceptible to skin conditions in the past may want to talk with their family physician regarding preventative oral medication.

GUIDELINES FOR WRESTLERS WHO HAVE A CURRENT SKIN CONDITION

- Wrestlers with any signs of a communicable skin conditions **MUST** be withheld from practice until a medical diagnosis and clearance is obtained.
- Wrestlers having any signs or symptoms of a communicable skin condition should be sent a doctor **IMMEDIATELY**.
- Wrestlers with a skin condition, who have current written permission for a physician to participate, should cover affected area with an occlusive (water resistant) dressing or a gauze pad with water resistant covering on at least one side until the lesion(s) is completely gone.
- Wrestlers having lesions from a communicable skin condition on their face or neck should launder their pillowcase daily.
- Wrestlers with any signs of a communicable skin condition should wash their hands frequently to avoid contaminating themselves or others.
- Wrestlers with communicable skin conditions should be made aware that contact they have with others during the school day, outside the wrestling room, may spread the disease to others.