

# 2011-2012 Communicable Skin Disease Info

## **COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

**Communicable skin conditions are a major concern in wrestling and with MRSA and Herpes Gladitorium outbreaks recently, the concern is greater than ever. If a participant has a suspected skin condition, NFHS rules require current, written documentation from an appropriate health-care professional stating the athlete's participation would not be harmful to an opponent. The NFHS has developed a form that can be used for that documentation and several state associations have adopted that form for use in their state. Regardless of the form used, it is imperative that ALL coaches perform routine skin checks of their wrestlers and require any wrestlers with a suspect condition to seek medical attention and treatment. It is also imperative that ALL referees perform skin checks as part of their pre-meet duties prior to EVERY meet. If there is a suspect condition, the wrestler, or coach MUST present the proper clearance form at the weigh-in for the dual meet or tournament, if the wrestler is to be allowed to compete. One of the keys in preventing the spread of communicable skin conditions is coaches and referees fulfilling their responsibilities professionally. It is, however, only one of the keys. The other, equally important key is proper prevention. While prevention can be complicated, it requires that a few basic steps be taken by ALL involved in the sport.**

- Educate coaches, athletes and parents about communicable skin conditions and how they are spread.**
- Clean wrestling mats daily with a solution of 1:100 bleach and water or an appropriate commercial cleaner.**
- Maintain proper ventilation in the wrestling room to prevent the build-up of heat and humidity.**
- Clean all workout gear (including towels, clothing, headgear, shoes, knee pads, etc.) after each practice.**
- Require each wrestler to shower after each practice with an antibacterial soap. Do not share bars of soap. Use individual soap dispensers.**

- **Perform daily skin checks to ensure early recognition of potential communicable skin conditions.**

- **Refrain from sharing razors or other personal hygiene supplies.**

**It is a coach's professional responsibility to insure that skin clearance forms presented by his or her wrestlers are legitimate and reflect the athlete's true condition. Coaches and referees are vital elements in controlling communicable skin diseases. Coaches and referees must err on the side of what is best for the health of all involved in the sport when dealing with communicable skin diseases.**

**Referees are the last line of defense in keeping wrestlers with communicable skin diseases off the mat. Their own safety is at stake. Coaches must realize that referees would not be placed in a position to make difficult participation decisions as often if coaches did their jobs. Covering an active infection does not meet the requirements of the skin lesion rule, this includes practice. Cold sores are considered a skin lesion and are subject to the communicable skin disease rules.**

**The following are the criteria for skin issues for Team Tennessee AAU Wrestling events:**

- 1. Referee over rules trainer.**
- 2. Written documentation over rules referee.**
- 3. Pre designated on site physician over rules written documentation.**