



A Guide to Address a Skin Infection Outbreak

A skin infection outbreak is a serious situation for a school district. The NYSPHSAA recommends taking a proactive approach and formalizing a plan before an outbreak occurs. The athletic director, school nurse, certified athletic trainer, chief school medical director, superintendent, and coach should be directly involved in developing the plan. Every precaution needs to be taken to limit the spreading of the skin infection to the rest of the athletes on the wrestling team and to other wrestling team members from other schools.

The following steps can be used to help reduce the spreading of a skin infection when an outbreak is confirmed by the district.

Step 1: Notify athletic director, school nurse, certified athletic trainer, chief school medical director, and superintendent of the suspected or confirmed case of a skin infection. Also, notify the local health department of a confirmed case of a skin infection. Follow the recommendations from the local health department.

Step 2: Instruct all wrestlers in the program (modified and high school) to clean out their lockers and wash all workout clothes. Consult with Buildings and Grounds Supervisor on the appropriate disinfectant to use. Disinfect all lockers, wrestling mats, and padded walls.

Step 3: Notify all wrestling parents of the outbreak. The local health department can help you with the letter to the parents. Schedule a parent/student meeting to help educate and increase the awareness of skin infections. Consider using the National Wrestling Association Web Video on preventing skin infections during the meeting.

Step 4: If your wrestling team has participated in any dual meets or tournaments, notify all school districts that you have a confirmed case(s) of a skin infection. Inform the school(s) of the type of skin infection that has been confirmed and what types of symptoms are associated with the skin infection. The health department can collaborate with you on drafting this letter. **NOTE:** Every precaution must be taken to protect all infected wrestler's HIPPA rights.

Step 5: If a wrestler has a suspected case, they should be examined by a physician, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner. Have the school nurse or certified athletic trainer perform daily skin inspections to help identify any potential new cases. Consider suspending all wrestling activities, other than conditioning the athletes, to avoid direct skin to skin contact.

Wrestling activities, including dual meets and tournaments, can be resumed when the chief school medical director and local health department feel the spreading of the infection has been contained and it is safe to return.

School districts have a great responsibility to protect their student athletes and the student athletes of other school districts when it comes to skin infections. The NYSPHSAA staff is always available to our member schools for advice and information to help with any outbreaks of a skin infection. If you have any questions or need further assistance, contact Todd Nelson, Assistant Director, at (518)690-0771.