



Basic Hygiene Guidelines for the Prevention of Staphylococcal Infections in Schools

EDUCATION

Students, their parents, faculty and staff should be provided information about what *Staphylococcus aureus* is, how it is spread and how staph infections can be prevented.

HAND HYGIENE

Students, faculty and staff should be instructed about the correct technique for hand washing, including the importance of washing hands before eating or preparing food, after touching any skin lesions (“sores”) and wounds or clothing contaminated by drainage from lesions and wounds, and after using the toilet. Instructions should include the following:

- Turn on faucet and wet hands with running water.
- Apply soap and spread across all surfaces of hands.
- Scrub all surfaces of hands, including between each finger, for at least 20 seconds (saying the alphabet slowly will take at least 20 seconds).
- Rinse hands under running water.
- Dry hands with paper towels or air dryers.
- If available, use a paper towel to turn off faucet handles.

HYGIENE

Students, faculty and staff should be provided information about general hygienic measures, including the following:

- Keep your hands clean by washing thoroughly with soap and water. Use

an alcohol hand gel when soap and water are not available.

- Avoid sharing eating and drinking utensils.
- Avoid sharing unwashed towels, washcloths, clothing, or uniforms.
- Avoid sharing personal items (e.g., deodorant, razors).
- Change socks and underwear daily.
- Wash bed linens and pajamas regularly, at least once a week if feasible.
- Wash soiled bed linens and clothes with hot water and laundry detergent. Drying clothes in a hot dryer, rather than air-drying, also helps kill bacteria in clothes.
- Bathe or shower with soap each day.
- Bathe or shower with soap after every sports practice or competition.
- Keep cuts and abrasions clean and covered with clean, dry bandages until healed.
- Follow your health care provider's instructions on proper care of wounds.
- Avoid contact with other people's wounds or material contaminated by wounds.

HYGIENE FOR SPORTS PARTICIPANTS

In addition to the previously mentioned recommendations, sports participants should be provided these recommendations:

- Do not share towels, clothing or uniforms.
- Don't store wet, dirty clothing in lockers.
- Avoid sharing personal equipment.
- Keep equipment clean. Follow coach's directions about cleaning the equipment.
- Keep cuts, abrasions and wounds covered with clean, dry bandages. Persons with draining wounds or infections are not allowed to participate

in practices or games until the wound has stopped draining.

- Report any cuts, abrasions or wounds to the coach and school nurse.

ADDITIONAL MEASURES

If multiple cases of *Staphylococcus aureus* infection are identified in a school, students and their parents, faculty and staff should be provided information about what *Staphylococcal aureus* is, how it is spread, and how staph infections can be prevented. The local health department may need to implement more stringent requirements during an outbreak.

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[Questions or Comments](#)