

What is MRSA?

MRSA stands for Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus which is a type of “staph” bacteria. Staph bacteria are one of the most frequent causes of skin infections in the US. Most of the time these skin infections are minor, but Staph can also cause serious infections.

Can MRSA be treated?

Yes, MRSA can be treated. It is resistant to certain types of antibiotics which makes it more difficult to treat. But there are other antibiotics that are still able to kill the MRSA bacteria. Treatment may include draining the wound by a healthcare provider and doing a culture which will show exactly which antibiotics are susceptible or resistant to MRSA.

How is MRSA spread?

All Staph bacteria, including MRSA are almost always spread by direct physical contact. STAPH BACTERIA ARE NOT SPREAD THROUGH THE AIR. The bacteria can also spread when people come in contact with objects or surfaces that have been contaminated with the bacteria. These objects include towels, clothing, bedding, gym or sports equipment, soiled bandages, bars of soap, cosmetics, razors, etc.

What can we do to prevent MRSA infections?

- *provide staff and student athlete’s information about MRSA
- *encourage frequent hand washing
- *encourage proper personal hygiene
 - showering immediately after practice or games
 - wearing clean clothing
 - properly storing dirty laundry
 - doing laundry in a timely manner(using hot water)
- *discourage the use of sharing personal items
 - towels, clothing, bar soap, sports equipment
- *ensure proper cleaning with EPA approved disinfectants
 - anti-bacterial
 - anti-viral
 - anti-fungal
- *encourage staff and student athletes to clean wounds and keep them bandaged
- *encourage staff and student athletes to consult healthcare providers with any suspicious skin lesions.

What is Stevens Athletic Department doing to prevent the spread of MRSA?

1. In January or 2007, the Stevens Athletic Department had surfaces throughout the Schaefer Athletic Center sprayed with the Sports Aide System. The Sports Aide System is a breakthrough antimicrobial treatment specifically designed to protect athletic equipment and facilities. The active antimicrobial technology in Sports Aide creates a durable, invisible, protective layer that effectively controls the growth of a wide array of bacteria, mold, mildew,

fungi, and algae 24/7/365. The Sports Aide System offers peace of mind from microbial contamination like no other product on the market.

2. The Stevens Athletic Department has educated all student athletes and staff on the importance of proper hygiene such as hand washing, cleaning and covering open wounds, discouraging the use of shared items, and seeking medical attention for any suspicious lesion.
3. The Stevens Athletic Department will be installing hands free alcohol based hand sanitizers throughout the athletic buildings. They will be located in Canavan Arena, the fitness center, the cycling studio, ATC, wrestling room, near the racquetball courts, Schaefer Center lobby, Walker Gymnasium and the varsity weight room.
4. The Stevens Athletic Department will be installing liquid soap dispensers in all locker room showers with body wash to discourage the sharing of bar soap.
5. Stevens will provide all Physical Education classes with anti-microbial wipes and spray to ensure that all physical education equipment is properly disinfected after each use.
6. Stevens has medical kits located throughout the athletic buildings that may be used to clean and cover open wounds should an injury occur.

Important:

Any student athlete diagnosed with MRSA will be treated on a case by case basis to determine return to play. This decision will be made by the team physician and is non-negotiable.

More information regarding MRSA can be found at

<http://nj.gov/health/cd/mrsa/index.shtml>

http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/at_mrsa.html