Folsom High Wrestler Hygiene 2026-27:

Preventing Skin Infections

Why is Hygiene a Big Deal for Wrestlers?

Wrestling is an intense sport with a lot of skin-to-skin contact, which creates a perfect breeding ground for bacteria, viruses, and fungi. Common skin infections that can sideline you include:

- **Ringworm:** A contagious fungal infection that appears as a circular, itchy rash.
- **Staph Infection (including MRSA):** Caused by bacteria, this can lead to painful skin boils and other severe infections.
- **Impetigo:** A highly contagious bacterial infection that causes red sores especially on the face.
- Practicing proper hygiene is your number one defense against these infections. By making a few simple, consistent habits, you protect yourself, our teammates, and our season.

Immediate Action and Showering

The "No-Delay" Shower Plan

You have a 60-minute window after practice or a match to get clean and reduce your risk of infection. **The faster you get in the shower, the better.** Your pores are still open right after intense exercise, making it easier to wash away mat grime and germs.

Gear you need:

- Your own liquid antibacterial soap (Defense Soap, Nizoral, or liquid Dial soap).
    - https://www.defensesoap.com
- A clean washcloth or loofah.
- A clean dry towel that is not shared.

Step-by-step shower instructions:

1. **Get Wet:** Enter the shower and thoroughly rinse your body with warm water.
2. **Apply Soap (Start with your Head):** Pour your chosen liquid antibacterial soap onto your washcloth or loofah.
    1. **Wash your hair first.** Using Nizoral as your shampoo can help prevent fungal issues on your scalp.
    2. **Work your way down your body**, paying special attention to high-contact areas like your neck, arms, shoulders, and back. Use the washcloth or loofah to scrub your skin and create a rich lather.
    3. **Wash your legs and feet last.** Be sure to get between your toes and on the bottoms of your feet, as these areas often come into contact with the mat.
3. **Wait 30 Seconds:** Allow the soap to sit on your skin for at least 30 seconds before rinsing. This gives the ingredients time to work effectively.
4. **Rinse Completely:** Rinse all the soap off, starting from your head and working your way down. Ensure no soap residue is left on your skin, as it can cause irritation.
5. **Dry Off:** Use your personal, clean towel to dry your entire body. Pay close attention to drying off completely, especially between your toes, as fungi thrive in moist areas.

In-Competition Quick Clean

If you can't get to a shower right away after a match, use antibacterial wipes to clean off your head, neck, arms, and hands immediately. Remember, this is a temporary fix, not a replacement for a full shower.

What NOT to Do

- **Don't use bar soap:** Germs can live on wet bar soap and be transferred to others.
- **Don't share anything:** This includes towels, water bottles, soap, razors, or equipment.
- **Don't leave dirty gear in your bag:** This creates a perfect "bacteria factory".
- **Don't wear wrestling shoes outside the wrestling area:** You don't want to bring dirt and germs from the street onto the mat.

Laundry and Equipment Care

Laundry: The Germ-Killing Plan

Every piece of clothing that touches your skin during practice or competition is now "dirty" and needs to be washed. Don't ever reuse clothes or towels without washing them first.

What to wash daily:

- Workout clothes
- Singlets
- Towels

What to wash weekly:

- Kneepads and ankle braces
- Gear bags (wash or wipe down regularly)
- Headgear (wipe down with a disinfectant spray and hang daily to dry)

Laundry instructions with bleach (for white or color-safe items only):

1. **Sort and Prep:** Separate your laundry by color. Bleach can only be used with white and some color-safe items. Check clothing labels to be sure.
2. **Add Detergent and Bleach:** Add your regular laundry detergent. For a standard machine, add **⅔ cup of Clorox Disinfecting Bleach**. For a high-efficiency (HE) machine, use **⅓ cup**. If your machine has a dispenser, use that. If not, add the bleach to the water as the machine fills, before adding clothes.
3. **Use Hot Water:** Wash the load in the hottest water recommended on the clothing labels to ensure maximum germ-killing effectiveness.
4. **Check Contact Time:** The bleach needs about 10 minutes of contact with the clothes to fully sanitize them. A normal wash cycle will provide this.
5. **Dry on High Heat:** Tumble dry on a high heat setting. The heat will help kill any remaining bacteria.

Alternative for colored clothes or bleach-free laundry:

Use a laundry treatment like Defense Super Shield Laundry Treatment. It is designed to target bacteria and fungi in athletic gear.

Daily Equipment Care

- **Headgear:** Wipe down your headgear with a disinfectant wipe or spray as much as possible. Hang it up so it dries out everyday. This is crucial for preventing infections on your face and head.
- **Wrestling Shoes:** Never wear your wrestling shoes off the mat. This prevents germs from the outside world from contaminating the practice and competition areas. Clean the soles of your shoes with the disinfectant floor mats after every use. Hang them to dry every day.
- **Gear Bag:** Empty your gear bag after every practice. Don't leave sweaty clothes inside. Regularly launder your bag with a disinfectant.
- **Practice Gear:** **Get out of it immediately after practice.** Have other clothes to change into or put over so that your school backpack, car seats, furniture at home, or bedding do not come in contact with your used gear. **Gross!**
- What If You Spot a Skin Issue?
- **Don't Ignore It:** If you see any unusual skin markings, rashes, or sores on yourself or a teammate, report it immediately to our coaches.
- Apply cream immediately such as Lotramin, Tinactin, Miconazole
- **Don't Practice with an Infection:** Do not get on the mat if you have a known or suspected skin infection. Covering the lesion is not enough to prevent the spread.
- **See a Doctor:** Get checked out by a medical professional. You will need a doctor's clearance before returning to the mat. **Take this form to your doctor and have them complete it before the next competition:**
    - https://www.cifstate.org/sports/wrestling/skin/2019-20_NFHS_Wrestling_Skin_Lesion_Form.pdf

Sign, date, cut off the bottom only below the text and return to Coach Scott.

Wrestler Print/sign/date Parent/Guardian Print/sign/date