
NEWS RELEASE

**AIA RESUMING WRESTLING TOURNAMENTS
THOUGH CONTINUED SAFETY PRECAUTIONS ADVISED**

PHOENIX, AZ (February 11, 2014) – After the investigation of the reported skin infections, the AIA has rescheduled the Division III and IV State Wrestling Tournaments to Friday and Saturday, February 14 & 15, at Tim’s Toyota Center in Prescott Valley, Ariz. The Division I and II Sectional Wrestling Tournaments have been rescheduled for Saturday, February 15, taking place at their original locations as well. The Division I and II State Wrestling Tournaments will be held on Friday and Saturday, February 21 and 22, at Tim’s Toyota Center. The complete schedule with full details for all divisions will be posted by Noon tomorrow at: <http://www.aia365.com/championships/wrestling>.

“We recognize that the postponement of the wrestling tournaments was an inconvenience but when compared to protecting the health and wellbeing of our students, it was choice that had to be made,” says AIA Executive Director, Dr. Harold Slemmer.

It is imperative that schools, parents and participants remain vigilant about preventing skin infections. Any student playing a direct skin-to-skin contact sport is encouraged to inspect himself or herself at least once a day. If they have any questionable areas, they should let their coach know and be looked at by a physician so they can be given the proper treatment immediately. Waiting could increase the opportunity for the infection to spread. Mats, practice clothes, headgear and the inside of gym bags should be cleaned daily. Wrestlers should use antibiotic soap and always shower before leaving the gym. Some coaches also recommend a 4% solution of chlorhexidine gluconate (CHG) such as Hibiclens -- a surgical scrub soap -- to clean the skin. It remains on the skin for 24 hours.

Please see the following pages for the Maricopa County Department of Public Health information on skin infections in Athletes and status update.

Media, please contact the Maricopa County Department of Public Health Contact: Jeanene Fowler; Public Information Officer; jeanenefowler@mail.maricopa.gov; 602-722-1806, with any questions.

Schools, please contact the Arizona Interscholastic Association with any questions.

For more resources, please visit the following links:

- <http://www.thisweeknews.com/content/stories/sports/2014/01/28/wrestling-skin-infections-raise-need-for-precaution.html>
- <http://www.thisweeknews.com/content/stories/sports/2014/02/05/wrestling-preventative-care-can-limit-skin-infections.html>
- <http://www.ghsa.net/treatment-and-prevention-skin-infections-wrestlers>
- <http://www.themat.com/SkinGuide.pdf>
- <http://www.nfhs.org/search.aspx?searchtext=wrestling%20skin%20infections>

Skin Lesions in Maricopa County Wrestlers Update 2/11/14

We understand that there is frustration and concern regarding the information surrounding the issue of reported skin lesions among wrestlers from Maricopa County schools involved in a wrestling event on Jan 24 & 25. Please allow us to provide you a current status from Maricopa County Department of Public Health (MCDPH):

- MCDPH learned on Friday, Feb. 7 from AIA of the concern of multiple cases of skin lesions in wrestlers from multiple Maricopa County schools. No wrestlers with skin lesions have been reported to MCDPH from schools outside of Maricopa County.
- Skin lesions are considered breaks in the skin such as a blister, rash, cut, scrape or burn.
- After receiving a list of affected schools from AIA on Monday, Feb 10, MCDPH began investigating the 5 schools that reported wrestlers with skin lesions and participated in the event on Jan 24 and 24. A total of 15 affected wrestlers have been reported in Maricopa County thus far.
- Currently, MCDPH is contacting the affected school administrators, parents, wrestlers and health care providers to determine the cause of these lesions. At this time, we do not have a clear diagnosis of these skin lesions but we are hoping in the next few days after contacting all the affected individuals, we will have a better understanding.
- MCDPH is also contacting schools who have not reported wrestlers with skin lesions to give them information about reporting any lesions if identified.
- We do know that skin lesions are common in wrestlers and that there are medically proven approaches to prevent the spread of skin disease regardless of the specific cause (bacteria, virus, fungus). MCDPH has developed a fact sheet (below) to highlight these best practices.
- Parents who are concerned about lesions on their child's body should contact their health care provider. There is no need to contact MCDPH.
- If we learn anything new that presents an increased risk to the athletes, we will share our recommendations immediately with AIA and the public. At the conclusion of our investigation, we will share the complete findings with AIA and the community.



Prevention of Skin Infection Spread in Athletes

- Refer athletes with possible skin infections (those with an open wound or break in skin of any kind, e.g. blister, rash, cut, scrape or burn) to a healthcare provider such as team physician, athletic trainer, school nurse, or primary care doctor. Consider excluding from play or practice until evaluated and cleared by a healthcare provider.
- Educate athletes about ways to prevent spreading the infection.
 - keep wounds covered and contained, those with lesions that cannot be covered should be excluded from participation
 - shower immediately after exercise and do not share bar soap or towels.
 - shower before using whirlpools
 - wash and dry uniforms after each use
 - wash hands frequently with soap and water before and after playing sports and activities such as using shared weight-training equipment, when caring for wounds including changing bandages, and after using the toilet.
 - both plain and antimicrobial soap are effective for hand washing, but liquid soap is preferred over bar soap in these settings to limit sharing.
 - if hands are not visibly dirty and sinks are not available for hand washing, alcohol-based hand rubs and sanitizers can be used. Alcohol-based hand rubs with at least 60% alcohol content are preferred.
 - **report possible infections** to coach, athletic trainer, school nurse, other healthcare providers, or parents.
- Wash your uniform and clothing after each use. Follow the clothing label's instructions for washing and drying. Drying clothes completely in a dryer is preferred.
- Wear protective clothing or gear designed to prevent skin abrasions or cuts.
- Cover skin abrasions and cuts with clean dry bandages or other dressings recommended by your team's healthcare provider (e.g., athletic trainer, team doctor) until healed. Your healthcare provider may recommend that you not participate in athletics even if the wound can be covered depending on the type and location of the wound.

- Follow your healthcare provider's instructions for when and how often to change your bandages and dressings.
- Avoid sharing personal items such as towels and razors that contact your bare skin.
- Do not share ointments that are applied by placing your hands into an open container.
- Use a barrier (such as clothing or a towel) between your skin and shared equipment like weight-training, sauna, and steam-room benches.
- Instruct the athletes with a potential or confirmed infection to avoid using whirlpools or therapy pools not cleaned between athletes and other common-use water facilities like swimming pools until infections and wounds are healed.

Review equipment cleaning and disinfecting guidance

- For surfaces, any approved bathroom cleaner or any product containing bleach
- For specific ingredients, product should contain Triethylene Glycol 5.40%, Alkyl* dimethyl benzyl ammonium saccharinate Or Octyl decyl dimethyl ammonium chloride Dioctyl dimethyl ammonium chloride Alkyl*dimethyl benzyl ammonium chloride For other effective products please visit the following website <http://epa.gov/oppad001/chemregindex.htm>

For laundry

- Any laundry detergent is effective, wash in warm or hot water. Machine drying is preferred.
- Routine laundry procedures, detergents, and laundry additives will all help to make clothes, towels, and linens safe to wear or touch. If items have been contaminated by infectious material, these may be laundered separately, but this is not necessary.