



BACKGROUNDER – CA-MRSA / STAPH INFECTIONS

CA-MRSA (Staph)

CA-MRSA – or “Community-Associated methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (CA-MRSA)” – more commonly known by athletes as *Staph*, is a type of skin infection caused by *Staph* bacteria. “What makes this infection particularly serious is its resistance to many antibiotics. MRSA/Staph is often misdiagnosed as spider bites,” notes Nora Boyd, chair of the CCAR-CAC Working Group and Infection Control Specialist with Bluewater Health in Ontario. “The infection usually starts out as a small bump that looks like a pimple or a boil but becomes larger, redder and often develops pus drainage. MRSA/Staph infected skin lesions can progress quickly from a skin irritation to an abscess or serious skin infection. If left untreated, it can infect blood and bones and become life-threatening.”

CA-MRSA (Staph) in Sports

CA-MRSA (Community-Associated methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*) is a type of skin infection caused by *Staph* bacteria.

- MRSA/Staph is often misdiagnosed as spider or insect bites.
- MRSA/Staph spreads by infected skin to healthy skin contact as well as infected objects to healthy skin. It can enter healthy, clean, undamaged skin through such contact.
- MRSA/Staph lives on skin and survives on objects, such as towels and exercise equipment for 24 hours or longer.

To prevent MRSA/Staph infections, remember to:

- Shower and wash after **EVERY** practice and sporting event.
- Wash your hands with soap and water **OFTEN** – or use an alcohol-based hand rub (minimum 60%).
- **NEVER** share personal items (e.g. soap, towels, creams, razors, clothing, brushes, nail files).
- **CLEAN** and disinfect all shared sports equipment (e.g. mats, pads, helmets) after each use.
- **REPORT** any suspicious sores to your doctor.
- **COVER** all open sores with a bandage.

Hand Hygiene

Hand hygiene refers to removing or killing germs on the hands. There are two methods for removing germs on the hands:

- washing with soap and running water
- or using an alcohol-based hand rub (minimum 60%).

Handwashing with soap and running water must be performed when hands look dirty. If running water is not available, use moistened towelettes to remove dirt and follow with an alcohol-based hand rub.

OR

If your hands appear clean then use an alcohol-based hand rub. The rub needs to have a minimum of 60% alcohol to be effective.



Canadian Committee on Antibiotic Resistance
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How to wash hands

- Wet hands with warm water.
- Apply liquid or foam soap. If bar soap is used, it must be a personal item and not shared.
- Vigorously lather all surfaces for 15 seconds.
- Using a rubbing motion, rinse soap from hands under running water.
- Dry hands thoroughly using paper towels.
- Turn off taps with a paper towel.

How to use an alcohol-based hand rub

- Ensure hands appear clean.
- Squirt a loonie-sized amount of alcohol-based hand rub onto palm of hand.
- Spread alcohol-based hand rub over all surfaces of the hands.
- Rub hands until dry (it should take a minimum of 15 seconds).

COACHING ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

The Coaching Association of Canada is a not-for-profit amateur sport organization with the mandate to improve the effectiveness of coaching across all sports and at all levels of the sport system. For more information, please visit: www.coach.ca).

CANADIAN COMMITTEE ON ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE

The Canadian Committee on Antibiotic Resistance (CCAR) was formed in 1998 to co-ordinate Canadian efforts to control the development and spread of antimicrobial resistance. CCAR's membership represents those government and non-government organizations that have the common goal of reducing antimicrobial resistance in Canada. CCAR's main areas of interest are resistance surveillance, infection prevention and control, and optimal antibiotic use. We provide outreach to health care and agricultural communities through a variety of activities, including professional seminars, reports and informational documents for specific target audiences and managing one of the most comprehensive website on resistance in Canada (www.ccar-ccra.org).