

# Wrestling Hygiene

Marshwood Little Hawks Wrestling goes out of its way to ensure that the wrestling equipment used are in the best condition possible. Wrestling is a close contact sport and it presents some challenges in keeping everyone healthy. Wrestlers are more susceptible to some communicable skin infections such as ringworm, but these **incidents are quite rare**, and can be prevented with the proper precautions, such as washing the mat and showering after practice.

MLHW cleans and disinfects all wrestling mats before AND after practices. We also require wrestlers to shower immediately after practices and tournaments or **within 60 minutes** of event. This is to prevent the spread of germs and viruses that could potentially keep our athletes from competing. Wrestling clothes should never be re worn after a practice. They should be immediately removed and placed in the hamper for cleaning. These simple steps will help keep our athletes healthy and ready to wrestle this season!

Here are some tips to prevent skin infections...

- **Soap** – it's all what brand you use. You need an antibacterial soap. Defense, a wrestling soap brand is great, however a less expensive option is Dial Antibacterial. You can also use liquid Dial Gold. Using your hands (no wash cloths). Work head to toe, feet being last. Another option is Tea Tree oil Shampoo and body wash which is available at most pharmacies, Walmart or online. Brands: BAEBODY and MAJESTIC PURE are popular.
- Also, be aware antibacterial soap can dry skin out and dry skin is more susceptible to skin infections so a good **moisturizer** will do the trick.
- Detergents – Use what you usually like to use, but add plain **old White Vinegar** to the stinky stuff and towels. Adding vinegar stinks when you first put it in your wash, but when your stuff comes out, the vinegar smell is gone and the funk smell is down.
- Timing is Everything – Please, please, please have your child walk in the front door and **go straight to the shower**. Do not let them sit in their bed, on sheets, or touch the couch. The germs can get off of them and transfer to your furniture and clothing similar to a poison ivy oil – whatever it touches stays and hangs out.
- **Disinfect** wrestling shoes, headgear, and wrestling bags frequently.
- **Antibacterial Wipes** – Great for throwing into your wrestler's gear bag to use after a match when you have to travel an hour or more home. They have off brand antibacterial wipes as well. You can also bring a bottle of antibacterial hand sanitizer and put it on as well.
- **Keep finger nails trimmed**. Having your fingernails untrimmed is a quick way to spread skin infections. You can pass skin infections by scratching other people with long nails. Long nails allow you to harbor skin infections under your nails and break the skin of your workout partner or an opponent. An open wound is a quick way to get MRSA, ringworm, or any skin-related infection.
- **Do not wear your wrestling shoes on the street**. Wearing your shoes on the dirt or the street can transmit diseases from your shoes to the mat. The best wrestling shoes can be expensive, wearing them off the mat can cause them to wear out quicker.
- **Sick?** Stay off the mat.
- **Important:** Affected athletes should inform coaches and medical staff promptly of any illnesses and skin lesions.
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