

**Muhlenberg College Guidelines for the Prevention, Detection, and Treatment of
Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA)**

MRSA: It appears at this time that the type of MRSA we are most likely to see is Community-Acquired MRSA. This type is different from the Hospital-Acquired MRSA. It is different in that it occurs in people who have not been hospitalized and are for the most part healthy. It is also different than hospital MRSA in that it can be treated with a wider variety of antibiotics.

This document provides guidelines for:

- **MRSA General Infection Control Considerations**
- **Muhlenberg College Specific MRSA Prevention Guidelines**
- **Recommended Treatment of Athletes with Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA)**

This document is not intended as a strict protocol to be followed, rather as guidelines to which refer.

MRSA General Infection Control Considerations

The principal mode of transmission of MRSA is by direct person-to-person contact. MRSA is not a hardy organism in the environment, but it can occasionally be transmitted via inanimate objects.

The CDC recommendation is to practice good hygiene to prevent the transmission of MRSA.

- Athletic trainers and personnel should wash their hands or use alcohol-based hand hygiene products before contact with players.
- Gloves should be worn for wound care.
- Draining lesions should be kept clean and covered with dry gauze.
- Surfaces should be wiped down with a disinfectant after contact with a player with skin lesions, and if reusable instruments are used, they should be manually cleaned and then soaked in Cidex.
- Players' clothes, sheets, and towels should be washed in hot water.
- Personal items such as clothing, linens, towels, razors, and bars of soap should not be shared.

Hand hygiene: Encourage players to wash their hands frequently. Alcohol-based hand hygiene products such as Purell are effective, convenient, and suitable for performing hand hygiene when hands are not visibly soiled.

Body Shaving: Discourage cosmetic body shaving among players. Shaving causes small cuts in the skin, increasing the risk of colonization and infection due to staphylococci. Prior outbreaks of skin infections (some serious) due to CA-MRSA have been clearly linked to body shaving. All current and new players should be informed that body shaving is a risk factor for potentially serious skin infections due to MRSA.

Personal Equipment: Discourage sharing of personal equipment by players. Infrequently, towels and clothing can serve as vectors of transmission if not cleaned between uses.

Cut care: Keep cuts and abrasions clean, dry, and covered. Players with skin lesions (Cuts, boils, furuncles) should not use the whirlpool and should refrain from using "community" lotions and balms.

Disinfection: Tables in the athletic training room should be wiped down with a disinfectant. Players should wipe down the pads on weight benches after use. Dry the whirlpool completely after cleaning. Manually rinse and clean clippers, callus shavers, and other implements before soaking in Cidex.

Multiple use balms and ointments: We recommend that players wash their hands and don gloves and before dipping into containers. Players should not “double dip” without washing their hands between.

Muhlenberg College Specific MRSA Prevention Guidelines

1. Muhlenberg College Stadium Turf is treated by Plant Operations every 90 days with a disinfecting solution which covers the MRSA bacteria.
2. Soap is supplied in the showers and bathrooms of all locker rooms. Hand soaps are effective in washing off the germs when used correctly. The important thing to remember is to wash hands vigorously with warm soapy water for at least 15 seconds.
3. Each student athlete is provided with their own individual towel and uniforms for practice and games. These are then washed daily.
4. Tables and counter tops in the Athletic Training Office are cleaned with a bleach water solution at least daily. *A bleach water solution of 1:10 (3/4 cup bleach in 1 gallon of water) kills MRSA and is effective for bathrooms and locker rooms, but this bleach solution only remains effective for 24 hours after mixing, so it should be discarded at the end of the day. The solution can be put in a spray bottle.*
5. Whirlpools in athletic training office are cleaned at least daily and more often as needed with disinfectant.
6. Student athlete education is done informally by athletic training staff and formally through posters.
 - Prevention guidelines begin with typically good hygiene practices. Frequent handwashing is encouraged
 - Body shaving and the sharing of razors and blades is discouraged.
 - Sharing of towels, clothing and personal equipment is discouraged.
 - Players are advised that any cuts and abrasions, scrapes, etc., should be reported to the athletic trainer at once for proper evaluations and treatment.
 - Body contact should be avoided where open wounds are present.

**Recommended Treatment of Athletes with
Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA)**

Prompt identification/treatment of skin lesions can:

- Reduce the likelihood of serious, invasive infectious complications in players, and
- Limit the spread of MRSA to other players, team staff, and family members

Identification of possible infections due to MRSA

Players should report to the team athletic trainer immediately if any of the following occur:

- Boils, pimples, pustules, or draining cuts
- Red, painful, warm areas of skin
- Cough with fever and/or chest pain
- Painful, red swollen joints associated with fever
- Back pain with fever