

Preventing the spread of *Herpes gladiatorum* infection

General Information

Herpes gladiatorum is a skin infection caused by the Herpes Simplex type 1 virus. This skin infection is spread by direct skin-to-skin contact.

Generally, lesions appear within 8 days after exposure to an infected person, but in some cases the lesions take longer to appear. Good personal hygiene and thorough cleaning and disinfecting of all equipment are essential to helping prevent the spread of this and other skin infections.

All wrestlers with skin sores or lesions should be referred to a physician for evaluation. These individuals should not participate in practice or competition until their lesions have healed.

Before skin lesions appear, some people have a sore throat, swollen lymph nodes, fever or tingling on the skin. *Herpes gladiatorum* lesions appear as a cluster of blisters and may be on the face, extremities or trunk. Seek medical care immediately for lesions in or around the eye.

Herpes gladiatorum infections can recur. The virus can "hide out" in the nerves and reactivate later, causing another infection. Generally, recurrent infections are less severe and don't last as long. However, a recurring infection is just as contagious as the original infection, so the same steps need to be taken to prevent infecting others.

Be Responsible!

- Do not conceal lesions.
- Wrestling with *Herpes gladiatorum* lesions will spread this infection to other wrestlers.

Personal hygiene for wrestlers

Showering

1. Shower at school immediately after practice, using soap and water.
2. Use your own plastic bottle of liquid soap.
3. Use your own towel, and don't share your towel with anyone else. Wash your towel after each use, using hot water with detergent (and bleach if possible); and dry on high heat setting.

Equipment and gear

1. Change your practice and competition gear every day.
2. Clean your headgear daily with the same soap you use for showering.
3. Clean the soles of your shoes before stepping on the mat. Use a towel soaked in a disinfectant solution.

General hygiene

1. Clean your hands often! Scrub up for at least 15 seconds using soap and warm water. You can use an alcohol-based hand rub if your hands are not visibly soiled. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with your hands.
2. Clean your hands before and after practice and competitions.
3. Do not pick or squeeze skin sores; drainage is very infectious.
4. Report any skin lesions or sores to your coaching staff immediately.

Cleaning and disinfecting the environment

Always use an EPA-approved disinfectant* (viricidal, fungicidal, bactericidal) OR bleach solution (800 ppm = ¼ c bleach: 1 gallon water). Mix daily to be effective.

1. Wash mats after every practice session or competition.
2. Clean and disinfect locker rooms and shower areas daily using EPA-approved product or bleach solution.
3. Launder mop heads and cleaning cloths daily using laundry detergent, hot water and dry on high heat setting.

*EPA-approved disinfectants must be used according to manufacturer recommendations.

