

Healthy Skin Practices

Staphylococcus aureus (commonly referred to as “staph”) is a bacteria that can live on human skin of even the cleanest individuals. It can cause boils, wound infections, abscesses, cellulitis, impetigo, pneumonia and even bloodstream infections. Usual symptoms of a skin infection are redness, warmth, swelling, tenderness and boils or blisters. Open wounds and wounds that are draining pus or bodily fluids can cause spread of infection to other persons and to other places on the same individual. *A spider bite does not cause an infection, but it can create a site for staph infections to start!*

Do you have a skin sore or wound that has one or more of the following:

- ❖ Draining pus?
- ❖ Draining other fluids?
- ❖ Warm, red, and tender?
- ❖ Getting bigger and more painful everyday?
- ❖ Looks like it is coming to a head like a pimple?
- ❖ A wound that won't seem to heal?

If you have any of the above symptoms, you may have the beginnings of a staph infection.

- ❖ Tell a parent, coach, or caretaker and ask to see a doctor as soon as possible.
- ❖ Cover all draining lesions with a bandage.
- ❖ Do not use public equipment if you have an open wound.
- ❖ Wash hands frequently for at least 15 seconds especially before and after touching any sores or wounds.

Do not attempt to pop open any sores, boils, or blisters.

Even if you don't have any of the above problems, you can keep your skin healthy and prevent the above problems and infectious diseases by:

- ❖ Regularly washing your hands with soap and water for at least 15 seconds:
 - Before and after eating and using the restroom
 - After exercising, playing sports, or in close contact with others
 - After sneezing, coughing, or blowing your nose
- ❖ Bath daily to keep clean.
- ❖ Use hand lotions or moisturizers to keep your skin healthy and free of abrasions.
- ❖ Do not share toiletries or linens.
- ❖ Keep your house and bathroom clean.
- ❖ Avoid “homemade” or “jail-made” tattoos.
- ❖ Eat healthy, exercise regularly and don't smoke.



Infectious Disease Epidemiology

Adapted from Texas Department of State Health Services,
Louisiana Office of Public Health, and the CDC