

Skin Health and Wrestling

At the recent C.I.F. Southern Section Wrestling Coaches Advisory Committee meeting, the topic of skin health was a matter of concern. We feel that the conditions that are spreading throughout the section, the state and the country are hurting kids and are a serious threat to the entire sport. It will become more and more difficult to recruit kids and coaches if these problems continue to grow. Ringworm is a common problem along with rising instances of Impetigo, Herpes and various bacterial infections. This is a national concern, as evidenced by pages 58 and 59 of the new NFHS rulebook, which makes Communicable Skin Conditions a point of emphasis. There are some good practical suggestions on those pages for running a healthy program.

Below is a list of some other suggestions from various Southern Section coaches. These are not endorsed and/or tested by the CIF, but we feel that it is necessary to share information and ideas and to take proactive steps to combat this growing problem. Not all of these will be practical for **all** programs, but all coaches must follow the first rule of the effort; **Do not let your kids wrestle with a communicable condition.** Do not sabotage the whole sport by hiding a condition so that your squad can win a match. Keep contagious kids out of practice and competition. Some practical suggestions include:

- Have your team shower and wash with antibacterial soap like Dial after each practice. Kids should not share bars. If kids are bashful, have them shower in their shorts. Dandruff shampoo can help to counteract ringworm.
- Keep your mats clean. Use a powerful soap like KenClean Plus. Read the instructions. Try to leave a good amount of the material on the mats wet and allow it to air dry. This lets the chemicals do their work.
- Do not mix bleach and soap/mat cleaner. They counteract each other.
- Use clean materials every time you wash the mats. Use clean dry towels. If you use mops, make sure that they have a chance to completely dry between uses, preferably in the sun. If you use one of the new “bucketless mops”, get multiple cleaning heads to use in a rotation.
- Sunlight helps to kill microorganisms. Keep shades and blinds open. If you get a chance to let a mat bake in the sun on a pool deck for a bit, it can help.
- Use an electric leaf blower to clean the mat of hair and dirt before you wash it. A broom can do this but not as efficiently and easily.
- Get a chemical sprayer backpack and fill it with the proper mix of mat cleaner and water. After sweeping (or blowing) the debris off the mats, simply spray on the solution and allow it to air dry.
- Keep mats in good repair. Cuts and holes in the mats can allow organisms to grow inside the mats.
- Have the kids clean their shoes before they get on the mats or perhaps make them put the shoes on the edge of the mats.
- Keep your room ventilated. Humidity and moisture foster the growth of organisms.
- Some products put onto the skin can help protect wrestlers. KenShield is a popular skin protection foam for use before wrestling. AQtiv PURE alcohol free hand and body skin cleanser can be used after wrestling to destroy organisms (info at <http://miqropure.com>). It can be used as a sort of “waterless shower” at a tournament.
- Real showers with proper soap immediately after wrestling are the best protection!



WRESTLING

PROPER GROOMING AND SKIN CHECK PROTOCOLS

The following protocols and procedures are recommendations to conduct the mandated skin checks prior to a wrestler competing.

It is very important for the official to be as well versed in the recognition of skin disorders and problematic conditions. The official is sometimes the frontline and possibly the only line to help keep the condition from spreading. Education is the key for the officials, coaches and athletes to keep these problems under control.

PROTOCOLS

- Make sure the coach is with you
 - Do not touch the wrestlers when doing the skin check- it is all visual
 - Same gender male wrestlers-male official, female wrestler-female official
1. Have the athlete remove their singlet/they must have proper undergarments only
 2. If there is tape on an area that you did not see being taped-have the wrestler remove the tape-use some common sense.
 3. Wrestlers should face you-with hands out
 4. Check for fingernail length
 5. Check for proper hair length, if athlete is wearing a hair cover make sure they have it and remind them it must be secured to headgear.
 6. Have the athletes extend their arms out to the side
 7. Visually examine face and under chin and behind ears, chest, under the arms, front of legs, front & side of scalp
 8. Have the athlete spin around slowly-with arm still extended, examine sides of body and legs
 9. Have the athlete stop with back to you
 10. Visually examine back of scalp, top of shoulders, behind the ears, down the back, under armpits, down the legs.
- If there is any questionable skin condition, ask the athlete did you know what this is.
 - Ask wrestler if he has a proper CIF Skin Lesion Clearance Form for it.
 - If so, check the return dates and where the skin infection was marked on the form, confirm your observation site with the site that is marked on the form.
 - If questionable skin condition does not have a form and you think it may be communicable, then you have a duty to not allow that wrestler to compete.