

Your 5 step Quick-Read Virus-proofing action plan: Five immediate steps to prevent dangerous viruses and skin diseases.

1. Avoid cosmetic shaving. Yes, I'm talking *down there* - and anywhere else other than the face or legs. Its been reported that your chances of acquiring CA-MRSA (Community acquired, meaning, not from hospitals), is 6 times higher if you shave chance of acquiring CA-MRSA
2. Wash towels, clothing, and equipment such as knee braces, knee sleeves, headgear, etc. Daily (and don't share headgear, towels or kneepads). I highly recommend Kennedy industry products, which are certified to kill CA-MRSA, Staff, Covid-19 among others. The NATA report, which a lot of this info was gleaned, suggested a 1:10 beach solution. However, many people have skin reactions, causing breakouts, due to this ratio. This is why I turn to Kennedy Industries, a company that seems to have *gotten it right* with so many of their disinfectant products.
3. Shower immediately after a session, dry everything thoroughly, especially the feet and toes (and webs in between toes) and groin area, and apply a bacteriostatic powder (such as Zeasorb-AF) to the groin and armpit areas.
4. Recurrent issues with ringworm? Check your animals. A regular dose of fluconazole throughout the season has been proven to help in these cases (please consult your physician, I am not one). Also, dogs, cats and farm animals have been known to be carriers, resulting in a constant source of re-infection.
A word on ringworm: in some cases, one half to three fourths of a team has been known to be infected with ringworm when cases exist. Taking preventive measures can, of course, greatly reduce these numbers.
5. ****Critically** Important:** Practice Good Hand Hygiene: Wet your hands first, apply the soap, rubbing the hands together vigorously for 15-20 seconds, then dry your hands thoroughly with a disposable towel.

The CDC (Center for Disease Control) actually assembled a Hand Hygiene Task Force, which wrote a 56-page document about it. That's how important it is.

Two most common viral infections found in athletic populations:

Herpes Simplex - outbreaks have often spread throughout entire teams. The NATA report documents a summer wrestling camp where 60 out of 175 wrestlers at the camp developed herpes lesions. Antiviral drugs such as acyclovir or valacyclovir have been known to be effective. Sometimes valacyclovir is used as a preventive measure. In fact, a well-known

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camp that has been a community leader in preventing skin disease at their camps, had a requirement that athletes who attend, have a prescription for it and be using it prior to attending camp.

Molluscum Contagiosum - highly contagious viral skin infection which may occur anywhere on the body including the face, neck, arms, legs, abdomen, and genital area, but rarely on the hands or feet.

Bonus information that keeps you healthier, and its probably under-discussed at this time:

- Having a good, well-balanced diet, and eating at regular times. A good diet feeds your immune system and keeps it strong.
- Get plenty of quality sleep. Youths are estimated to need 9 hours or more of sleep per night. Do the math, figure out when you have to be up, and make sure you go to sleep early enough. Lack of sleep causes a whole array of bad things to happen to your system (as my family doctor, Dr. Marques, pointed out to me before recommending a sleep doctor to me). Your immune system takes a hit, making you vulnerable to diseases. Your brain function decreases, making it more difficult to learn and retain info. Higher levels of depression. Just a lot of bad things. In short: get your beauty sleep.

***The National Athletic Trainer's Association (NATA) wrote a position statement on skin diseases, which was published in the Journal of Athletic Training in 2010. A lot of information posted in this document was gathered from their well-written paper. You are welcome to look it up. It has a lot of detail, including some really gross pictures of skin diseases. My thanks to them for writing such a thorough piece, and I hereby give them a ton of credit in providing a blueprint for this report.*

A word about CA-MRSA...

At the time of NATA's report, CA-MRSA was said to be reaching "near-pandemic levels". While medicines have been created to offset it since this writing, in 2010, it is still a very dangerous disease - and it continues to mutate.

Taking Preventive Measures.

This was directly from the NATA report:

Standard precautions and preventive measures must become the norm in athletic facilities for these programs to be implemented. Hospital- based studies have shown a direct correlation between high levels of "safety culture" and adherence to safe practices. Institutions that have seamlessly integrated these programs into their daily routine have had a high degree of success in keeping their stakeholders accountable for disease- prevention measures.

My book, [Wrestling in the Coronavirus World: How to protect your kids now and in the future](#), goes into specific detail about preventive measures to greatly increase your chances of staying disease-free.