

NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS BLOOD RULES

BASEBALL (Rule 3-1-6) A player or coach who is bleeding or who has an open wound shall be prohibited from participating further in the game until appropriate treatment has been administered. If medical care or treatment can be administered in a reasonable amount of time, the individual would not have to leave the game. The length of time that is considered reasonable is umpire judgement. The re-entry rule applies to starters. If there is an excessive amount of blood on the uniform, it shall be changed before the individual participates again. *(See Communicable Disease Procedure for Blood-Borne Infections in the NFHS rule book.)*

BASKETBALL (Rule 3-3-6) A player who is bleeding, has an open wound, has an excessive amount of blood on his/her uniform, or has blood on his/her person, shall be directed to leave the game until the situation is corrected, unless a time-out is requested by, and granted to, his/her team and the situation can be corrected by the end of the time-out. *(See Communicable Disease Procedure for Blood-Borne Infections in the NFHS rule book.)*

FOOTBALL (Rule 3-5-10c) The official discovers a player who is bleeding, has an open wound, has any amount of blood on his/her uniform, or has blood on his/her person, shall be directed to leave the game until the bleeding is stopped, the wound is covered, the uniform and/or body is appropriately cleaned, and/or the uniform is changed before returning to competition. Such player shall be considered an apparently injured player as in rule 3-5-10a.

(Rule 3-5-10a) A time-out occurs when: an apparently injured player is discovered by the official while the ball is dead and the clock is stopped and for whom the ready-for-play signal is delayed, or for whom the clock is stopped. The player shall be replaced for at least one down, unless the halftime or an overtime intermission occurs. This time-out, if not charged, is an official's time-out. *(See Communicable Disease Procedure for Blood-Borne Infections in the NFHS rule book.)*

SOCCER (Rule 3-3-2e, 1) An athlete who is bleeding, has an open wound, has any amount of blood on his/her uniform, or has blood on his/her person, shall be directed to leave the game until the bleeding is stopped, the wound is covered, the uniform and/or body is appropriately cleaned, and/or the uniform is changed before returning to competition. That player shall leave the field, but may be replaced. *(See Communicable Disease Procedure for Blood-Borne Infections in the NFHS rule book.)*

SPIRIT (Rule 2-1-14) A participant who is bleeding, has an open wound, has any amount of blood on his/her uniform, or has blood on his/her person, shall be directed to leave the game until the bleeding is stopped, the wound is covered, the uniform and/or body is appropriately cleaned, and/or the uniform is changed before returning to participation. *(See Communicable Disease Procedure for Blood-Borne Infections in the NFHS rule book.)*

SWIMMING (Rule 3-2-6) When it is detected that a competitor is bleeding, has an open wound, has any amount of blood on his/her suit, or has blood on his/her person, shall be directed to leave the contest until the bleeding is stopped, the wound is covered, the suit and/or body is appropriately cleaned, and/or the suit is changed before returning to participation. When this occurs prior to the start of a relay race, the start shall be delayed while the competitor receives proper treatment or is replaced by another legal entry off the relay entry card. Once a relay race begins and blood is detected in the starting area or on a competitor who is already in the water (except for the fourth swimmer when in the water), the race shall be stopped. The area and competitor shall be properly treated and the race resumed after an appropriate recovery period. If the bleeding cannot be stopped, the wound is not properly covered or there is no legal substitute on the relay card, the (individual or relay) team shall forfeit the race. *(See Communicable Disease Procedure for Blood-Borne Infections in the NFHS rule book.)*

TRACK AND FIELD & CROSS COUNTRY (Rule 4-5-10) A competitor who is bleeding, has an open wound, has any amount of blood on his/her uniform, or has blood on his/her person may complete the running event or field event trial. However, the competitor shall not participate further until appropriate treatment has been administered. *(See Communicable Disease Procedure for Blood-Borne Infections in the NFHS rule book.)*

WRESTLING (Rule 8-2-7) Any contestant who is bleeding will be charged with bleeding time. The number of time-outs for bleeding is left to the discretion of the referee. If bleeding is not controlled within a cumulative time of five (5) minutes, the match shall be terminated and the opponent shall be awarded the match by default.

If bleeding occurs as a result of unsportsmanlike conduct, illegal holds/maneuvers or unnecessary roughness and the bleeding contestant uses 5 minutes of bleeding time, the injured wrestler will be the winner of the contest by default.

Any cleanup necessary after bleeding has been curtailed is not counted against the maximum time limit of 5 minutes.

(Rule 8-2-8) The match shall be stopped for any wrestler who is bleeding, has an open wound, has any amount of blood on his/her uniform, or has blood on his/her person, shall be directed to be treated until the bleeding is stopped, the wound is covered, the uniform and/or body is appropriately cleaned, and/or the uniform is changed before returning to competition. *(See Communicable Disease Procedure for Blood-Borne Infections in the NFHS rule book.)*

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR SPORTS HYGIENE, SKIN INFECTIONS, AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

**National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)
Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC)**

Proper precautions are needed to minimize the potential risk of the spread of communicable disease and skin infections during athletic competition. These conditions include skin infections that occur due to skin contact with competitors and equipment. The transmission of infections such as Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) and Herpes Gladiatorum, blood-borne pathogens such as HIV and Hepatitis B, and other infectious diseases such as Influenza can often be greatly reduced through proper hygiene. The NFHS SMAC has outlined and listed below some general guidelines for the prevention of the spread of these diseases.

Universal Hygiene Protocol for All Sports:

- Shower immediately after every competition and practice.
- Wash all workout clothing after each practice.
- Wash personal gear (knee pads and braces) weekly.
- Do not share towels or personal hygiene products (razors) with others.
- Refrain from full body (chest, arms, abdomen) cosmetic shaving.

Infectious Skin Diseases

Strategies for reducing the potential exposure to these infectious agents include:

- Athletes must be told to notify a parent or guardian, athletic trainer and coach of any skin lesion prior to any competition or practice. An appropriate health-care professional should evaluate any skin lesion before returning to competition.
- If an outbreak occurs on a team, especially in a contact sport, all team members should be evaluated to help prevent the potential spread of the infection.
- Coaches, officials, and appropriate health-care professionals must follow NFHS or state/local guidelines on “time until return to competition.” Participation with a covered lesion may be considered if in accordance with NFHS, state or local guidelines and the lesion is no longer contagious.

Blood-borne Infectious Diseases

Strategies for reducing the potential exposure to these agents include following Universal Precautions such as:

- An athlete who is bleeding, has an open wound, has any amount of blood on his/her uniform, or has blood on his/her person, shall be directed to leave the activity (game or practice) until the bleeding is stopped, the wound is covered, the uniform and/or body is appropriately cleaned, and/or the uniform is changed before returning to activity.

- Athletic trainers or other caregivers need to wear gloves and take other precautions to prevent blood or body fluid-splash from contaminating themselves or others.
- In the event of a blood or body fluid-splash, immediately wash contaminated skin or mucous membranes with soap and water.
- Clean all contaminated surfaces and equipment with disinfectant before returning to competition. Be sure to use gloves when cleaning.
- Any blood exposure or bites to the skin that break the surface must be reported and immediately evaluated by an appropriate health-care professional.

Other Communicable Diseases

Means of reducing the potential exposure to these agents include:

- Appropriate vaccination of athletes, coaches and staff as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).
- During times of outbreaks, follow the guidelines set forth by the CDC as well as State and local Health Departments.

For more detailed information, refer to the "Infectious Disease and Blood-borne Pathogens" and "Skin Disorders" sections contained in the NFHS Sports Medicine Handbook.

Revised and Approved in April 2010 and Approved for All NFHS Rules Books in October 2010