Skin Examination of Athletes

Goal: Identify concerning skin abnormalities for further evaluation by a health care provider

When to conduct a skin exam
• As part of league rules as in wrestling
• If there is concern for an outbreak among a specific group of athletes.

Where to conduct a skin exam
• Ensure a respectful environment
• Males should be examined wearing shorts and females should be examined wearing shorts and sports bra
• In a private location such as a locker room with good lighting
• A separate location should be provided for males and females
• Same gender examiners are preferred when possible

How to conduct a skin exam
• Ask the athlete if she/he has any skin problems
• All bandages and wound coverings must be removed prior to examination
• Have the athlete stand with arms outstretched, hands open, and feet shoulder width apart.
• Have athlete lift hair, adjust neck position, lift arms, etc. so that skin can be examined thoroughly
• Systematically examine the body from head to toe including,
  • Scalp, face, and remainder of head and neck.
  • Both arms, underarms, hands, and fingers
  • Chest, stomach, and back
  • Both legs, feet, and toes
• Avoid touching the skin if possible
• If the examiner touches the athlete’s skin she/he should wear gloves and change gloves every time between athletes
• After removing gloves, the examiner should clean hands every time between athletes

What to look for
Any abnormality on the skin related to:

1. Pattern
   • Appear scratched
   • Raised above the surface of the skin
   • Depressed or carved out below the surface of the skin
   • In groups, clusters, or patches
   • Draining fluid, moist, or crusted

2. Color
   • Red or surrounded by redness
   • In groups, clusters, or patches

3. Location
   • At or above the hair line on scalp
   • At edge of the lip or surrounding the mouth

4. Anything else abnormal

What to do if you find a skin abnormality
• Refer the athlete to a health care provider for further evaluation and treatment if necessary
• Follow league rules and health care provider recommendations regarding exclusion and return to activities

For more information see: www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/dtopics/athlete/
Skin Examination of Athletes

*Staphylococcus aureus* “Staph”

Herpes

Tinea or Ringworm

Molluscum

Scabies