

**University of Connecticut**  
**Athletic Training Education Program & Department of Sports Medicine**  
**Student/Staff Policy of Communicable Diseases**

**ATEP Policy**

Department personnel and athletic training students shall be excluded from work and activities temporarily if they are, or have been exposed to, certain communicable disease. Periods of exclusion for the various communicable diseases shall be those recommended by the individual's examining physician and/or the director of sports medicine at the University of Connecticut. Students, faculty, and staff of the University identified as having AIDS, AIDS-related complex, or any other communicable disease, will not be barred from working, teaching, attending classes, or participating in University-sponsored activities unless he/she presents a clear and present danger to the public health. All such decisions will be made on a case by case basis, will remain open to re-examination in light of new information, and will consider facts such as the individual's state of health.

**Department of Sports Medicine Policy**

Below is the policy created for the athletic training staff including athletic training students and full-time staff members. This policy is located in the Department of Sports Medicine P & P Manual.

Infections due to many forms of bacteria and viruses are well-known complications of participation on athletic teams. Due to the close contact of team staff, coaches, and athletes infections can spread easily and quickly. Most of these infections are treatable and do not pose life or career threatening consequences. However, certain bacteria are now known to have mutated in form and are becoming resistant to many treatment options. Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) is an example of a form of staphylococcal skin infection that has become resistant to many forms of antibiotics. MRSA and other forms of resistant bacteria in the past were limited to hospital and assisted living populations, but documented cases have occurred within various athletic teams and organizations. As the person-to-person contact increases within sport, the transmission rate of these infections increases. Due to the increased possibility of disease transmission within our athletic department, the proper antibacterial soaps, cleaners, and disinfectants must be available for everyone's use. To ensure the proper usage of these antibacterial soaps, cleaners, and disinfectants; as well as to limit disease transmission, the following guidelines and procedures will be followed by all sports medicine staff members.

**Education:**

Each member of the sports medicine staff must understand signs and symptoms of various diseases. If a communicable disease is identified within the athletic department or on campus, this information must be communicated to the rest of the staff so proper action can be taken to limit exposure and transmission.

In addition to maintaining our awareness, members of the sports medicine staff will educate coaches, athletes, and other team members on the following:

- 1) Risks and Methods of transmission including person-to-person contact, shared towels, soaps, improperly treated whirlpools, and equipment (mats, pads, surfaces, etc)
- 2) Signs and Symptoms such as pimples, pustules and boils, which present as red, swollen, painful, or have pus or other drainage.
- 3) Need for proper care and referral to prevent more serious infections such as pneumonia, bloodstream infections, or surgical wound infections.
- 4) Preventative actions to limit risk of transmission including:
  - 1) Keep hands clean by washing thoroughly with antibacterial soap and warm water or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer routinely.
  - 2) Showering using an antibacterial soap immediately after practices or games
  - 3) Do not use whirlpools with open wounds, scrapes or scratches
  - 4) Do not share towels, razors, or athletic apparel
  - 5) Ensure apparel worn during activity is properly cleaned immediately after activity and other equipment that cannot be washed daily is allowed to dry thoroughly
  - 6) Maintain clean facilities and equipment
  - 7) Notify sports medicine staff immediately of any open wound (any injury that involves a break in the skin) and/or any unusual symptoms
  - 8) Seek proper first aid for all wounds
  - 9) Refer all suspicious wounds to physician for proper treatment
  - 10) Cover all skin lesions appropriately before participation

#### **Wound Care:**

- 1) Follow Universal Precautions
- 2) Open wounds should be flushed thoroughly with sterile saline solution and then if necessary cleaned with hydrogen peroxide or betadine
- 3) All open wounds must be covered for any workout, practice, or game
- 4) All open wounds will be cleaned following any workout, practice, or game
- 5) Athlete will be instructed on signs and symptoms to watch for with their wound. If signs and symptoms present, sports medicine staff should be notified immediately.

#### **Hand-Washing:**

The following will be followed by sports medicine staff after each therapeutic session, use of bathroom facilities, exercise, before eating, or after cleaning:

##### With Water:

- 1) Use Hibiclens Cleaner
- 2) Wet hands and apply Hibiclens
- 3) Briskly rub hands together for minimum of 30 seconds
- 4) Rinse Hibiclens completely off hands
- 5) Use disposable towels to dry hands; if non-disposable towel is used, place in laundry after use

##### Without Water:

- 1) Use Purell hand sanitizer
- 2) Apply moderate amount of Purell
- 3) Rub hands together briskly until Purell has fully evaporated

- 4) Wash hands as soon as possible with Hibiclens and water

**Treatment or Taping Tables:**

- 1) Spray liberally with Sanicide following each therapeutic session
- 2) Wipe table with clean towel after a few minutes
- 3) Make sure to clean entire table surface
- 4) Note any cracks or other defects in table surface and report to Head ATC for replacement

**Therapy Equipment (ie: physioballs, cuff weights, dumbbells, etc):**

- 1) Spray liberally with Sanicide following each therapeutic session
- 2) Wipe clean with towel after a few minutes
- 3) Make sure to clean entire surface

**Hydrocollator Packs and Covers:**

- 1) Heat Pack must be placed in hydrocollator cover for use
- 2) Clean towel will be placed between hydrocollator cover and athlete
- 3) Towel will be placed in laundry following use
- 4) Pack will be replaced in hydrocollator
- 5) Cover will be placed on drying rack
- 6) Covers will be laundered daily
- 7) Hydrocollator will be drained and cleaned monthly

**Cold Packs:**

- 1) Cold Pack will be placed in plastic ice bag for use
- 2) Cold Pack will be wiped clean with Sanicide following each therapeutic session

**Towels:**

- 1) All towels are single use
- 2) Towels will be placed in designated laundry bag after use
- 3) Any towel with blood or body fluids will be placed in biohazard container for disposal

**Whirlpools:**

Non-filtered:

- 1) Athletes must shower before use
- 2) Athletes with open wounds will not be allowed to use whirlpool
- 3) As whirlpool is filled, whirlpool antiseptic will be added
- 4) Athlete will be recorded in whirlpool log
- 5) After use, athlete will be instructed to shower again
- 6) Whirlpool will be fully drained after each therapeutic session
- 7) Liberally spray all surfaces with Sanicide
- 8) Wipe all surfaces with clean towel
- 9) Place towel in laundry after use

Filtered:

- 1) Ph and bromine levels will be checked daily to maintain safe and effective level
- 2) Whirlpool will be drained once a month and all surfaces will be cleaned with Sanicide or other disinfectant
- 3) Filters will be cleaned once a month
- 4) Whirlpool will be refilled and 24 hours will be allowed for chemicals to reach safe levels before use
- 5) Athletes must shower before use
- 6) Athletes with open wounds will not be permitted to use whirlpool
- 7) Athlete will be recorded in whirlpool log
- 8) After use, athlete will be instructed to shower again

**Protective Equipment/Devices (ie: Orthoplast, soft casts, etc):**

- 1) Inspect for any blood or body fluid, discard in biohazard container if present
- 2) Inspect for excessive dirt or wear/tear, if present discard
- 3) Place in area separate from other devices to fully dry before next usage
- 4) Use only on one athlete, discard when no longer needed

**Exercise Equipment (ie: Bike, Stairclimber, Treadmill, weight machines, etc.):**

- 1) Spray all surfaces liberally with Sanicide following each use
- 2) Wipe dry with clean towel
- 3) Place towel in designated laundry bag
- 4) Equipment will be inspected and serviced yearly or as necessary

**Coolers:**

- 1) Rinse with hot water after each use
- 2) Spray coolers with bleach and water solution (50 parts per million of bleach)
- 3) Scrub with clean towel
- 4) Rinse with hot water
- 5) Either wipe with clean towel or place upside down on cooler rack for drying

**Water Bottles:**

- 1) Remove caps and rinse both cap and bottle with hot water after each use
- 2) Place caps in antibacterial dish soap and water solution until next usage
- 3) Wash bottles with antibacterial dish soap
- 4) Rinse bottles with hot water
- 5) Place bottles upside down in bottle carrier and place on cooler rack for drying
- 6) Caps must be rinsed thoroughly with hot water prior to next usage