

DATE: September 14, 2016

SUBJECT: STAPH INFECTION NOTIFICATION

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Odem High School has received reports of two confirmed cases of Staphylococcus Aureus infections. Since staph is spread primarily by direct (skin-to-skin) human contact or with direct contact to wound drainage of someone who is carrying or infected with the bacteria, anyone with a break in his or her skin is at risk. Staphylococcus may also occur less frequently through indirect contact with contaminated surfaces or items.

Staph infections begin abruptly. Symptoms may include a large area of redness on the skin, swelling and pain, followed by a pustule or abscess or boils and carbuncles (red, lumpy sores filled with pus). If left untreated, staph can infect blood and bones, causing severe illness that requires hospitalization.

Students and their family members should take the following precautions to help prevent skin infections:

- Encourage frequent hand washing with soap and warm water.
- Encourage students to keep their fingernails clean and clipped short.
- Avoid contact with other people's wounds or anything contaminated by a wound.
- Avoid sharing personal items such as razors, towels, deodorant, or soap that directly touch the body.
- Clean and disinfect objects (such as gym and sports equipment) before use.
- Wash dirty clothes, linens, and towels with hot water and laundry detergent. Using a hot dryer, rather than air-drying, also helps kill bacteria.
- Encourage students who participate in contact sports to shower immediately after each practice, game, or match.
- Keep open or draining sores and lesions clean and covered. Anyone assisting with wound care should wear gloves and wash their hands with soap and water after dressing changes.

We encourage you to be vigilant in looking for signs and symptoms of staph infections. If you or any family members exhibit symptoms as described above, you are encouraged to contact your family doctor.

Precautionary measures that Odem-Edroy ISD takes in the prevention of Staph infections include:

- Team uniforms and clothing worn during practices are laundered with hot water and laundry detergent as appropriate, and dried in a hot dryer to help eliminate bacteria.
- Custodial staff clean and disinfect the gymnasium and equipment daily.
- Towels used by the athletes are laundered with hot water and laundry detergent as appropriate, and dried in a hot dryer to help eliminate bacteria.

Odem-Edroy ISD is taking an active role in preventing the spread of the infection. The custodial staff is working diligently to make sure all frequently touched surfaces that come

into direct contact with people's skin, such as shared athletic equipment (e.g. wrestling mats and strength training equipment) are being disinfected.

The district is using cleaning procedures and cleaning solutions in the gymnasium as well as throughout the school that will abate bacterial growth.

Attached you will find basic guidelines for the prevention of staphylococcal infections in schools.

Thank You,

Lisa Perez RN
District Nurse

1-361-368-3881 ext 238