



# SMITHTOWN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION, HEALTH AND ATHLETICS

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Edward L. Ehmann

Superintendent of Schools

September 23, 2011

Dear Parents/Guardians,

There has been a confirmed case at Smithtown High School West of Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA), which can be a potentially fatal type of staph infection. Please be aware that we are continuing to take every precaution to insure that we are maintaining a safe and healthy environment within the Smithtown Central School District.

MRSA is spread through person to person contact or contact with contaminated items such as towels, razors, uniforms and athletic equipment. Poor hygiene practices help to facilitate the spread of the infection. Although this infection is most commonly associated with athletes, everyone in the community can be at risk.

The following guidelines are recommended by the New York State Department of Health to help decrease the potential spread of MRSA:

- Practice good hygiene (e.g., keeping your hands clean by washing with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, and showering immediately after participating in exercise).
- Wash all work out gear/uniforms after each practice or competition.
- Cover skin trauma such as abrasions or cuts with a clean dry bandage until healed.
- Avoid sharing personal items (e.g., towels, razors) that come into contact with your bare skin.
- Use a barrier (e.g., clothing or a towel) between your skin and shared equipment.
- Maintain a clean environment by establishing cleaning procedures for frequently touched surfaces and surfaces that come into direct contact with people's skin.

A clear understanding of MRSA, along with a coordinated effort involving students, parents, coaches, nurses and custodians will help minimize/eliminate the spreading of this infection.

More information is available to you through the district web site at [www.smithtown.k12.ny.us](http://www.smithtown.k12.ny.us). We hope it will help to answer any questions you might have about MRSA. Please make sure to contact your healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns that we have not addressed.

Thank you,

Patrick M. Smith  
Coordinator of Physical Education,  
Health and Athletics