



MT. LEBANON HIGH SCHOOL
155 Cochran Road; Pittsburgh, PA 15228
412.344.2003; FAX 412.344.2021

September 13, 2007

Dear Parents & Students:

For your information, we have one confirmed case of Methicillin Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) diagnosed within the high school athletic department. To prevent communicable disease transmission, the Mt Lebanon School District follows the Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) and the Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines for infectious diseases/conditions. We have been in contact with the Allegheny County Health Department to review our procedures and have been assured that we are fully complying with their guidelines. Though this health issue has emerged from the athletic department, as a precaution, we felt it was important to inform the entire high school community.

MRSA is a type of *staphylococcus aureus* bacteria normally carried on the skin and nose of healthy people. Some staph bacteria are resistant to the class of antibiotics usually used to treat staph infections such as methicillin, and are referred to as Methicillin-Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*. If a diagnosis of MRSA is made, the infection is treated with a different antibiotic. This infection commonly causes boils and soft tissue infection. The symptoms may include redness, areas warm to the touch, pain, drainage, discomfort, and swelling.

Preventive measures include frequent hand washing, no sharing of towels or equipment, showering as soon as possible after physical activity, and washing personal items (including practice gear) on a daily basis. In the event of a skin lesion, the area should be completely covered to aid in healing and to prevent transmission of infection. On the recommendation of the ACHD, any student who has been treated for MRSA and cleared to return to school, as well any student who has been or may be referred to their family physician for MRSA screening, may practice and play as long as all wounds are completely covered.

We have asked our athletic trainers and coaches to reinforce good hygiene and other healthy practices to our players. As an additional precaution, our custodial staff has utilized a more rigorous cleaning process of our locker rooms and weight equipment. Please note that in the past, the Allegheny County Health Department has assured us that research has shown that synthetic turf fields are not a source of bacteria such as MRSA.

We recommend that if you have concerns about your child's health, to contact his or her private physician. As always, information regarding a student with a diagnosed or a suspected infectious condition should be reported to the school nurse as well as the athletic trainer.

Further information on MRSA can be obtained from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) web site (www.cdc.gov) and our Health Services link on the District website at www.mtlds.org. If you have any questions, please call my office at 412-344-2003.

Sincerely,

Ronald P. Davis, Ed.D.
Principal