



## On the Sidelines

If you're an athletic trainer working the sidelines during a contest, you've got a lot to think about—treating injuries, massaging out muscle cramps, and making return-to-play decisions. But one thing should always be a priority: limiting athletes' risk of contracting an infection such as MRSA.

### Here are some tips for preventing the spread of infection during athletic events:

- Carry a bottle of an alcohol-based hand sanitizer and perform a waterless hand washing between athlete treatments.
- If possible, use disposable towels. If your program only has ordinary towels, never use the same one on multiple athletes.
- Follow the same sanitary practices with your sideline treatment table as you do with your athletic training room tables. Antibacterial wipes can be a convenient, effective cleaning aid.
- Watch for skin wounds that occur during the game. As soon as the wounded athlete is off the field or court, clean and disinfect the wound site and apply secure bandages.
- Talk to athletes and coaches about these procedures before the season, and make sure everyone on your sideline knows the importance of proactive wound care.



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