



SHOW ME YOU MEAN IT
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PILLAR 04 OF 06 • REGIMENTED AND PROTECTED RECOVERY

SKIN & STAPH

Disinfectant shower after every session, gear washed after every use, and never train contagious.

SAME FOR EVERYONE

5 MIN READ

01

WHY IT MATTERS

When you start training hard, your immune system dips. The first thing you get is sick, or staph, or another infection, and then you give it to everyone you train with.

One infection can take out you and half the team. That's why this is very much required, and why there's no Show Me or Pro version of this page. The protocol is the same for everyone, from the first week.

02

THE STANDARD

NON-NEGOTIABLE

- **Show** after every session with a disinfectant body wash, as soon as you finish. Morning, midday or night, every session.
- **Cover every open wound** before you step on the mat.
- **Wash your gear after every single use.**
- **No training with staph or ringworm**, or anything else contagious. Ever.
- **Contagious, sick or injured?** Come to training, watch, learn and ask questions. Don't train.
- **Take the medication and use the cream**, and finish the course.

I know you want to train. I've been there too. But if you're contagious, you'll sit the session out and watch. That's to protect your teammates, not to punish you: nobody gets to take their teammates' training away because they didn't want to miss a session.

03

HOW TO DO IT

STEP 01

BUY A DISINFECTANT BODY WASH

You want something antibacterial and antifungal. What I use is [Microshield 4 Chlorhexidine Surgical Handwash](https://www.chemistwarehouse.com.au/buy/50102/microshield-4-chlorhexidine-surgical-handwash-500ml) (https://www.chemistwarehouse.com.au/buy/50102/microshield-4-chlorhexidine-surgical-handwash-500ml) (Schülke, chlorhexidine gluconate 4% w/v, 500mL, about \$26 at Chemist Warehouse). I've heard the 2% version, [Microshield 2 Chlorhexidine Skin Cleanser](https://www.chemistwarehouse.com.au/buy/59635/microshield-2-chlorhexidine-skin-cleanser-500ml) (https://www.chemistwarehouse.com.au/buy/59635/microshield-2-chlorhexidine-skin-cleanser-500ml) (about \$21), is gentler and still works, but this is what I use. Read the label and the safety note at the bottom of this page.

STEP 02

SHOWER, COVER, WASH: EVERY TIME

1. **Shower after every session, as soon as you finish.** Disinfectant wash all over, including your scalp, feet and between your toes. The closer the shower is to the session, the better: at the School or gym if you can, otherwise straight home and into the shower. Finish at 1pm, shower at 1pm. Training, then work, then training again without a shower in between isn't okay. Don't sit around in sweaty gear.
2. **Cover open wounds.** Cuts, grazes, mat burn: clean them and cover them before you step on the mat.
3. **Wash your gear after every use.** Gi, belt, rashguard, shorts, spats, knee pads, mouthguard case. Every time, even if "it only got used once". Dry it properly; damp gear grows things.
4. **Don't share** towels, razors, drink bottles or gear.
5. **Nails short, feet clean.** Thongs or shoes off the mat, never barefoot in the bathroom.

STEP 03

CHECK YOUR SKIN EVERY DAY

Look in the shower, every day, and catch it early. These photos show what the common mat infections often look like, so you know what you're looking for. They're a guide, not a way to diagnose yourself: skin infections look different on different people. If you're not sure, assume it's contagious and see your GP.



STAPH (BOIL OR ABSCESS)

A red, swollen, hot, painful bump. It can look like a pimple or a spider bite that keeps getting worse, sometimes with pus.

Contagious. Don't train. See your GP today.

Photo: CDC / Bruno Coignard, M.D., Jeff Hageman, M.H.S. (public domain)



IMPETIGO

Red sores that weep and then dry into honey-coloured crusts. Often caused by staph or strep. Common on arms, legs and around the mouth.

Contagious. Don't train. See your GP for treatment.

Photo: Evanherk (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Impetigo_elbow.jpg), CC BY-SA 3.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>), via Wikimedia Commons



RINGWORM (FUNGAL)

A round, red, scaly ring that's often itchy, with clearer skin in the middle. It's a fungus, not a worm, and it spreads easily on the mat.

Contagious. Don't train until it's treated. See your GP.

Photo: CDC / Dr. Lucille K. Georg (public domain)



FOLLICULITIS

Small pimple-like bumps around the hair follicles, often where gear rubs or after shaving. It can be bacterial.

Keep it clean. If it's spreading, painful or not settling, see your GP. Not sure? Treat it as contagious.

Photo: Da pacem Domine (<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Folliculitis2.jpg>), CC0, via Wikimedia Commons

No photo here. Use the description and see your GP if you notice it.

COLD SORES OR MAT HERPES

A cluster of small blisters on a red base, often on the face, neck or arms. It can tingle or burn before the blisters show. Very contagious on the mat.

Don't train. See your GP the same day.



SPREADING REDNESS (CELLULITIS)

Redness spreading out from a cut or graze, red streaks, warmth, swelling, or a fever.

See a doctor today. Red streaks or a fever: don't wait.

Photo: James Heilman, MD (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cellulitis_following_abrasion.jpg), CC BY-SA 4.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>), via Wikimedia Commons

STEP 04

HAVE A GOOD GP BEFORE YOU NEED ONE

Skin infections move fast, so the GP you see matters. Find one who knows athletes, sees you quickly and gets the right treatment started the same day. Sort this out now, while your skin is clear, so you're not searching for a doctor with a lesion on your arm.



FROM THE COACH

My go-to GP is Dr Kouroush Mahmoodi at [Bondi Junction 7 Day Medical Centre](https://bondijunction7daymedicalcentre.com.au/the-team/) (<https://bondijunction7daymedicalcentre.com.au/the-team/>): ground floor, 1 Newland Street (corner of Oxford Street), [02 9291 9888](tel:0292919888), or [book on HotDoc](https://www.hotdoc.com.au/medical-centres/bondi-junction-NSW-2022/bondi-junction-7-day-medical-centre/doctors/) (<https://www.hotdoc.com.au/medical-centres/bondi-junction-NSW-2022/bondi-junction-7-day-medical-centre/doctors/>). He's been fantastic with staph: the right prescription quickly and properly treated, so I'm back on the mat as soon as possible. He's a big part of my plan.

RICKY

STEP 05

IF YOU'VE GOT IT, TREAT IT AND SIT OUT

1. **Tell your coach** before the session, not after.
2. **See your GP the same day** and get the right treatment (see [Have a good GP](#)).
3. **Take the medication. Use the cream.** Finish the whole course, even when it looks better.
4. **Still come to training.** Watch the session, learn through watching and ask questions. You just don't train.

5. **Wash everything** you've trained in, plus your towels and sheets.
6. **Come back** when it's healed or your doctor says you're not contagious.

STEP 06

COMPETING WITH IT IS YOUR CALL

Competing is different from training, and I can't stop you. There's not much point putting in all that work and then not going.

- **Small lesion?** I don't recommend it, but it's an option. Get it treated, cover it properly, and make the call with your doctor. Some events check skin and can pull you out, so know the rules.
- **Big abscess?** No. That's a danger to you and everyone you touch.

04

COMMON MISTAKES

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- ✗ **Training, going to work, then training again without a shower.** Shower after every session, as soon as you finish.
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- ✗ **Re-wearing gear that "only got used once".** Wash it every time, and dry it properly.
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- ✗ **Training on a "pimple" that keeps getting worse.** Assume it's contagious and see your GP.
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- ✗ **Stopping the medication when it looks better.** Finish the course.
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- ✗ **Telling your coach after the session.** Tell them before, so nobody else gets exposed.
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- ✗ **Sharing towels and drink bottles.** Bring your own.
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- ✗ **Barefoot in the bathroom.** Thongs or slides off the mat, every time.
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CHECKLIST

PACK THIS

EVERY SESSION

- ☐ A clean gi or a clean rashguard and shorts.
- ☐ Thongs or slides for off the mat.
- ☐ Strapping tape and a couple of waterproof dressings.
- ☐ A separate bag for sweaty gear.
- ☐ Your own towel and drink bottle.
- ☐ Disinfectant body wash, ready for straight after the session.

NOT PROFESSIONAL ADVICE

This is a hygiene routine from a coach, not medical advice. Skin infections need proper diagnosis and treatment. If something looks infected, is spreading, or comes with a fever, see a GP straight away. With any body wash, including the one I use: follow the label, stop if your skin reacts, and don't use it on broken skin or near your eyes and ears. Ask me for product recommendations for gear care.