

Mat Classic Skin Clearance Procedures

The following process governs the skin clearance at Mat Classic. While it would be ideal to have a similar or higher level of supervision at all wrestling events, the WIAA is not in a position to provide physician oversight at regular dual meets and other season/post-season tournaments. Given the potential changes that can occur with skin, skin conditions that were deemed non-contagious at one venue, may be ruled contagious at a subsequent venue. The goal of the skin clearance process is to enable wrestlers to compete while minimizing the risk for spread of contagious skin conditions.

Skin is a living organ which changes with time. Incompetent skin (which can be created by cold sores, ring-worm, scratches, mat-burns and more), is compromised and therefore at a greater risk for complications. Skin does not always follow the planned course of treatment and will commonly develop secondary infections (such as the cold sore or ring-worm becoming secondarily infected with staph) which may require subsequent or different treatment. As a result, there will be times when the diagnosis, treatment plans and return to mat dates change after the initial treatment/clearance determination.

At Mat Classic, the skin check process starts at the weigh-in line:

1. **Officials perform all of the initial screenings.** If the official has no concerns, the wrestler completes the weigh-in process. Most wrestlers follow this course and are never evaluated by the physician team.
2. **If a concern is noted, the wrestler presents with a completed skin clearance form and the official has no further concerns, the official may review and subsequently clear the wrestler** (again, the wrestler is not evaluated by the physician team).
3. **If the official identifies a concern and there is no current clearance form OR the official still has a concern after reviewing the skin clearance form, the wrestler is referred to the physician team.** These are the only wrestlers evaluated by the physician team. The physicians do not pick and choose which wrestlers are further evaluated; the officials refer those wrestlers for which they have a concern. Even with a prior physician's clearance, the official may choose to refer the wrestler to the physician team.

Once referred to the physician team:

1. **A physician performs a complete re-examination of the skin** (evaluating the suspicious lesions AND evaluating for spread/new lesions/incomplete treatment) including the asking of any pertinent questions and review of any outside information/notes/clearance forms. **If this first physician determines that there is no concern regarding participation, the wrestler is cleared and returned to the scale area to complete the weigh-in process.**
2. **If there are any concerns, the wrestler is referred to the next physician** (which may be any of the other physicians on the panel) **for a second history/exam/review** (subsequent reviews may occur simultaneously by one or more physicians at a time).
3. **This process is repeated until ALL of the physicians on the panel have examined the wrestler OR until at any point along the process, ANY ONE physician on the panel deems the wrestler "non-contagious", at which point the wrestler is cleared and returned to the scale area to complete the weigh-in process.**
4. **If after being reviewed by ALL of the physicians on the panel, none of the physicians have deemed the wrestler "non-contagious", ALL of the physicians again review the history, any outside information/notes and again examine the skin. At this point, the physicians confer as a group to confirm any final decision to disqualify a wrestler for a skin condition** (Yes, this is a lengthy and involved decision process).

NOTE the fail-safe: no ONE physician has the authority to disqualify a wrestler; it takes ALL of the physicians on the panel. Whereas it only takes ONE physician on the panel to clear the wrestler.

If a wrestler is followed by a physician on the panel and/or presents with a skin form completed by a physician on the panel that physician recuses him/herself from the process.

It is not until the wrestler is cleared or the final decision is made to disqualify the wrestler that the weigh in card is signed. We often do not know the wrestler's name or school until we sign this card.

If at some later time during the tournament, a question arises about a skin issue (by an official, coach, medical staff, tournament staff or another participant), the panel of physicians will be reconvened for an evaluation.

A word on Skin Clearance Forms:

The Skin Clearance Form is most useful when it is completed in detail including:

1. Dates:
 - a. Date of Exam
 - b. Date treatment Started
 - c. Date for Return to Mat
2. Specific Diagnosis
3. Specific Medications/Treatments (including actual name, dosage, frequency, duration)
4. Description/Location of the lesion (both written and noted on diagram).

The skin clearance form is far more useful when it reads, "Impetigo, NON-MRSA, treated with cephalexin, 1000 mg twice daily for 10 days, start date 12/1/2011, cleared for return to mat 12/4/2011" (rather than receive a note which reads "Bacterial infection, treated with antibiotics" which is what we often times get). While precise information may not be available/practical, **the more detailed the information, the more useful the skin form is for deeming the lesion "non-contagious"**. Those of us dealing with skin issues in wrestlers are well aware of this and frequently culture skin lesions and treat for multiple pathogens to cover a "worst case" scenario. As practicing physicians, we are also well aware of the time constraints with having one more form to complete. But again, the more complete/detailed the form, the more useful for deeming a lesion "non-contagious".

The Skin Clearance Form also has "treatment guidelines that suggest **minimum** treatment before return to wrestling". While not required, adherence to these guidelines is very helpful in substantiating that the skin condition is "non-contagious". Adherence to the guidelines is not a guarantee of clearance. Skin is a living organ that changes, patients do not always follow instructions and diseases/infections do not always respond as we would expect. Therefore, if a designated, on-site, meet physician is present, he/she may overrule the diagnosis of the appropriate health-care professional signing the medical release form.

A reminder that covering a communicable condition shall not be considered acceptable and does not make the wrestler eligible to participate. There are times when skin lesions are judged to be NON-COMMUNICABLE and we advise the wrestler to cover it for their own protection (to prevent a secondary infection).