

ESSENTIAL GUIDE

PROTECT YOUR PLAYERS: HOW TO EFFECTIVELY SANITIZE ATHLETIC GEAR

Learn about the dangers of unsanitary athletic gear, how traditional cleaning methods fall short, and a safer and more effective way to sanitize and deodorize gear.

You're probably well aware of the risks that come with being an athlete — especially injuries. And while you're taking every precaution to prevent torn ACLs and concussions, are you protecting your players from the germs lurking in your gear and locker room?

Staph infections and drug-resistant pathogens like MRSA can sideline your players and derail your season. Even worse, they pose potentially deadly threats to your athletes.

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HOW UNSANITARY GEAR CAN BENCH YOUR BEST PLAYERS

No one wants to see athletes sitting on the sidelines when they should be out on the field, but without proper precautions, your athletes could fall victim to serious diseases caused by germs in their gear and the locker room.

Thanks to the hot, humid environment that's so common in locker rooms, and the tendency for athletes to share more than a sense of camaraderie, [germs spread like wildfire](#) through athletic teams.

COMMON GEAR-RELATED ILLNESSES

You've heard of Athlete's foot (which is gross and irritating enough), but other pathogens present even more danger to your team. Here are a few of the most common germs found in locker rooms and gear:

- **Staph Infections**
Staphylococcus is the bacteria that causes [staph infections](#). These irritating skin rashes quickly spread through shared gear, on locker room surfaces, and through skin-to-skin contact. While they typically don't result in serious infections, an outbreak could bench your entire first string, and in more severe cases, can result in hospitalization.
- **MRSA**
Staph's more dangerous relative, [MRSA](#) (Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus), also spreads easily in locker rooms and can result in severe infections, long hospital stays, and even death. MRSA is particularly dangerous because it's [resistant to typical antibiotic treatments](#), leaving doctors with few drugs that are effective for serious infections.
- **E. Coli**
Escherichia coli, the bacteria that [causes stomach bugs](#), thrives in locker rooms and gear. E. coli can live on porous material (like jerseys and shoulder pads) for weeks if not properly sanitized. And trust us, your athletes won't be able to power through a stomach bug — much less keep anything down.
- **Influenza**
Every year, the flu goes around schools and teams, potentially benching your best players and putting your team at risk. Upper respiratory illnesses, like the flu, are especially dangerous for athletes, so they won't be able to train or compete until all "below the neck" symptoms clear up.



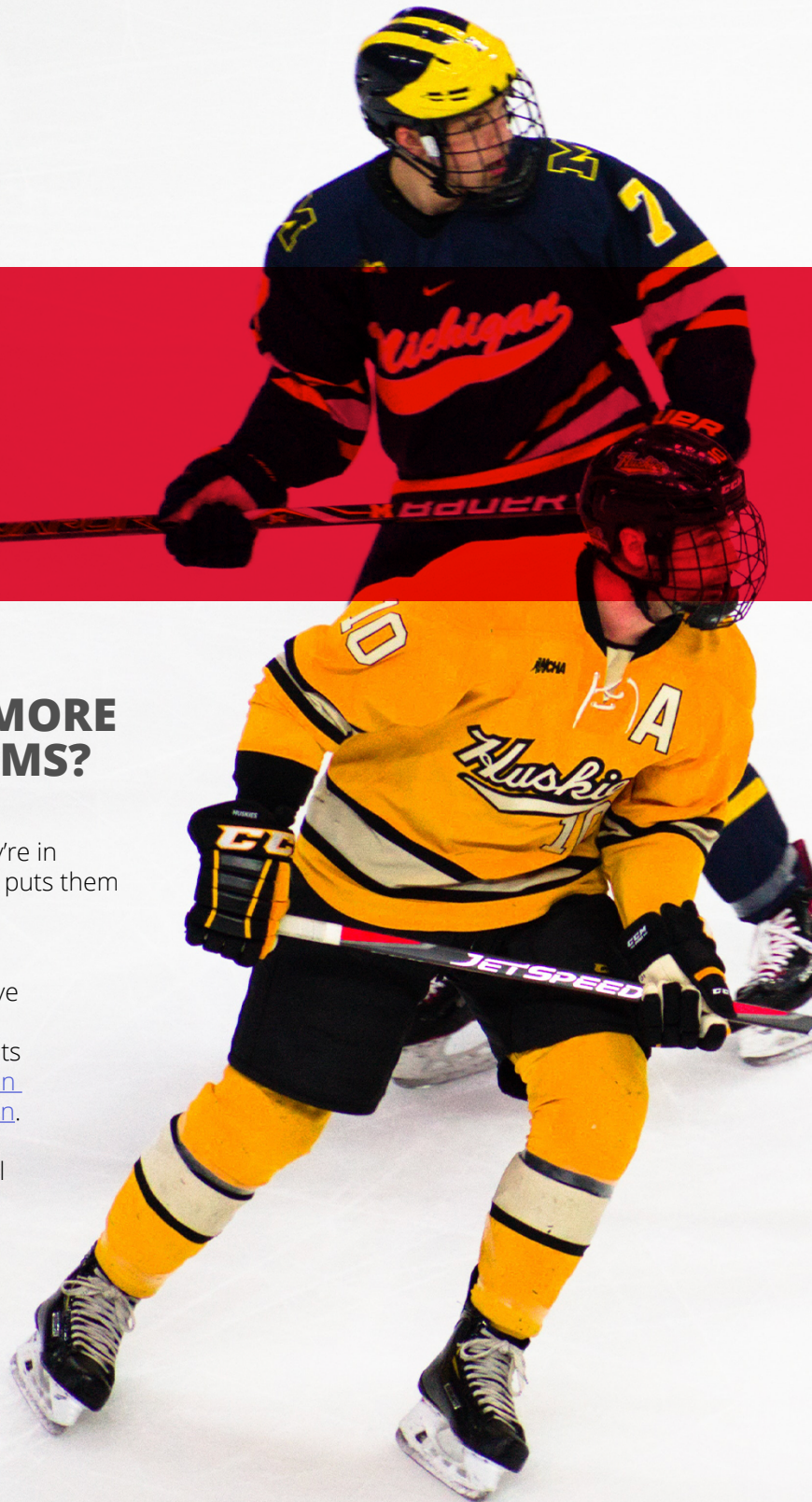
WHY ARE ATHLETES MORE VULNERABLE TO GERMS?

Your young, fit athletes may seem like they're in perfect health — but their athleticism also puts them at risk for disease.

It may come as a surprise, but athletes have weaker immune systems than the general population. The stress of intensive workouts [weakens their immune systems, resulting in more frequent infections during the season.](#) Athletes tend to be so dedicated to their teammates and to the game that many will opt to push through and play while sick, which can have severe consequences. Not only will a sick player perform at a lower level, but they'll also prolong their illness.

ODOR & INFECTION

On top of the dangers of the germs in your locker room, you also need to be wary of the odor. Not only does a smelly field house make for an unpleasant meeting environment, odor is a [tell-tale sign of microbial growth.](#) As the bacteria grow and multiply, they release toxins that result in the smell that always seems to linger in the locker room (you know the one). By the time you can smell it, the germs are already spreading on gear, surfaces, and players' skin.



WHAT'S AT STAKE?

If you don't get your infection issues under control, your entire season could be at risk. Just ask Coach Ressa, who wiped out staph infections at Newman High School in Texas. When he first arrived on the job, school administration and parents were so concerned with rampant staph infections that they were threatening to shut down the team (in Texas, no less!).

As a member of athletic staff, it's your responsibility to take players' health seriously. Just like you'd do everything in your power to prevent injuries, you should do the same to prevent outbreaks in your locker room.



"Before I got to Newman, they were just using the disinfectant solutions that the district provides, and I'm not sure if they were using it with regularity."

Coach Paul Ressa
Newman High School

Texas Team Fights Staph with Sports-O-Zone – Interview with Coach Paul Ressa of Carrollton ISD

TRADITIONAL SANITIZATION METHODS FALL SHORT

For too long, we've been sanitizing with products that fall short and take up too much time. If you're still relying on these traditional disinfectants, you run the risk of outbreaks in your locker room.

Soap & Water

The go-to cleaning product has been liquid dish detergent and water for a long time. And sure, it works, but it's not the most effective nor the most efficient way to sanitize hundreds of pieces of gear and equipment.

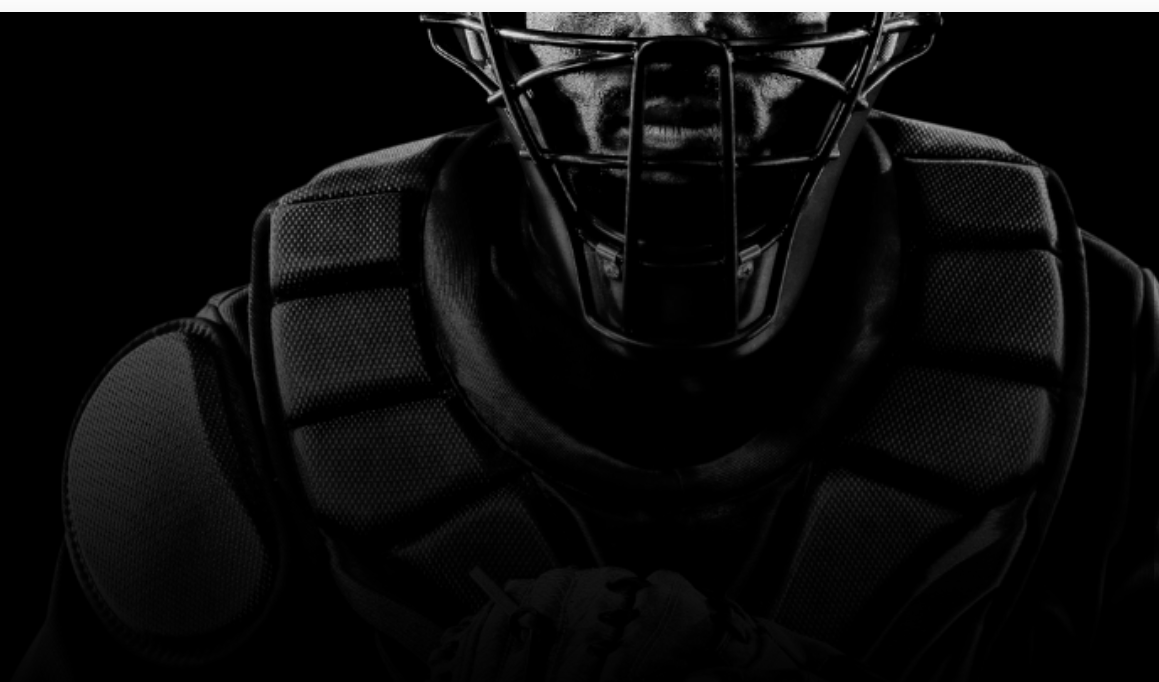
For one, washing by hand takes a lot of time and manpower. Even if your entire athletic staff sat down to work on handwashing each helmet, pair of shoulder pads, and water bottle, it would take weeks to complete. Liquids can also deteriorate your helmets, shoulder pads, and other gear over time, requiring you to replace gear more often.

And once you think you're done cleaning, the drying process begins. Gear must be completely dry before it can be stored, or else the same bacteria and molds will thrive in the damp environment — and you've wasted your time.

Aerosol Sprays

It's quick and easy to spray down the inside of a helmet and move on, but is it effective? Depending on the disinfectant, harsh chemicals in aerosols can kill bacteria, with the unfortunate side effect of damaging your gear's integrity. And worse, using these types of disinfectants can void your warranty on the gear, so you'll pay full price for any replacements.

Don't forget that aerosols are still liquids, so even the mildest aerosol disinfectant will still need to dry before the gear is safe to use again.



INTRODUCING: SPORTS-O-ZONE

Ready to revolutionize your sanitizing protocols? Sports-O-Zone is here to help you protect your players. Unleash the power of ozone to significantly reduce the presence of bacteria, viruses, molds, and fungi that live on your gear — **and keep your players on the field this season.**



“The results have been very beneficial. The equipment comes out smelling fresh and the players like the smell. Using the ozone machine doesn’t damage the equipment, which can happen using industrial washing machines.”

J. McMaster,
Manitoba Moose

WHAT IS OZONE?

Ozone is a naturally-occurring gas that protects us in more ways than one. In the atmosphere, the ozone layer keeps harmful UV rays from reaching Earth. When generated for sanitizing purposes, ozone molecules attack and destroy bacteria, viruses, and molds while also neutralizing odors in a completely dry sanitizing cycle.

Ozone molecules are small enough to penetrate the fibers and materials in your gear to kill germs, even in those hard-to-reach places (you know, fingers of baseball mitts, toes of cleats, and nooks and crannies in mouthguards). It's [99% effective at killing dangerous pathogens](#), creating a safer environment — and safer gear — for your team.

OUR PROVEN PROCESS

Inside the Sports-O-Zone chamber, we unleash the power of ozone to significantly reduce bacteria, viruses, and mold that live on your gear — so you never need to worry about smelly gear or spreading infections. We don't rely on harsh chemicals, liquids, or aerosol fragrances to sanitize gear, so your sports gear and equipment will last longer.

Sports-O-Zone is not only easy to use, but it's also more efficient than handwashing. You can effectively sanitize several pieces of gear and equipment simultaneously and still expect the same result. Simply toss your soiled gear into the machine, turn it on, and return to fresh, safe-to-use gear in just 32 minutes.

- **Kill Dangerous Viruses and Bacteria**

Ozone is a more powerful antimicrobial agent than chlorine bleach and iodine, so MRSA, staph, and other germs won't stand a chance.

- **Save Time & Effort**

"I can now clean all of the shoulder pads in one day... it used to take four of us almost a month and we still did not get them as clean and sanitary. I would not try to clean equipment again without [Sports-O-Zone]."

-M. Dibboll, Portage Collegiate Institute

- **Extend the Life of Your Gear**

We use ozone rather than liquid detergents, so your gear remains intact and safe to use—saving your budget and preventing injuries.

FULL-ROOM DISINFECTION



When was the last time you disinfected your entire athletic facility? We also offer full-room disinfection with our other germ-fighting [Gear Blaster](#), which can easily sanitize facilities up to 2,000 square feet.

Simply place the Gear Blaster in your locker room, weight room or equipment room, close all of the doors, and set it overnight. When you get back for practice the next day, the whole room will be sanitized and deodorized.

"Specifically for our field houses and wrestling rooms, we bought an additional product, the Gear Blaster, and it absolutely changed the game. For wrestling mats ... you can just roll this machine in, set it for however long you want, and leave for the night and it's ready to go when you come back in the morning."

Coach Paul Ressa

Newman High School

START SANITIZING WITH SPORTS-O-ZONE

Are you ready for safer, fresher, and longer-lasting gear? Sports-O-Zone is here to help. We know that school budgets are tight, but we're here to help. [Get in touch](#) for resources and more information that will help you lobby for funding to purchase the equipment.

[LEARN MORE](#)



Our team is here to answer all of your questions and support your sanitation efforts. Reach out to:

West of Mississippi:
Gae Eades
geades@globalo3.com

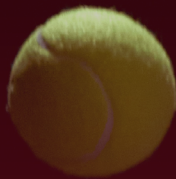
East of Mississippi:
Kathe Kain
kkain@globalo3.com

Please include the following in your email:

- Name of Team/School
- Contact Information
- Number of Sports-O-Zone units

More Resources:

[What is Ozone?](#)
[4 Reasons Germs Thrive in Locker Rooms](#)
[How to Prevent Staph Infections in the Locker Room](#)
[How To Prevent MRSA Infections](#)
[How Antibiotic Resistance Puts Your Team in Danger](#)
[Odor in the Locker Room Signals Dangerous Microbial Growth](#)
[Texas Team Fights Staph with Sports-O-Zone](#)



GLOBAL OZONE
INNOVATIONS

