

## **Rochester Youth Soccer Association Statement on H1N1**

(September 24, 2009)

With the continued rise of cases of the H1N1 influenza virus, Rochester Youth Soccer Association would like to make some recommendations for those participating in its soccer programs.

First, in accordance with the official statement from the Minnesota State High School League's Sports Medicine Advisory Committee, RYSA would encourage players to follow these strict guidelines for reducing the risk of transmission, "which focus on proper immunization and hygienic principles to reduce transmission:

- Proper hand washing;
- Don't share water bottles;
- Clean workout gear for each practice/competition."

For more information on this committee's guidelines, please click the link to their document here: <http://www.mshsl.org/mshsl/news/2009H1N1Statement.pdf?ne=9>

In addition, RYSA would like to make the following recommendations:

- Please have halftime fruit (oranges) placed in individual plastic baggies for each player or, alternatively, have one parent, wearing a glove or plastic bag on their hand, pass out the fruit to the players thus limiting the number of people in contact with the fruit;
- Please have post-game snacks be limited to those foods that are pre-packaged and individually wrapped;
- Please try to have anti-bacterial wipes and/or hand sanitizer available for players at halftime and/or post-game.

We are aware that some high school teams and/or conferences are foregoing post-game sportsmanship handshakes and hand slaps as an additional precaution and opting to simply line up and walk past their opponents and tell them "good game." RYSA will leave decisions regarding handshakes/hand slaps up to the discretion of its coaches. Opposing coaches should make the decision together and then alert the referee if they decide to change regular protocol. With all the close contact that takes place during games, the post-game handshakes and hand slaps do not necessarily add to the chances of passing infection along – especially in light of RYSA's other recommendations.

For those who believe their child/player is infected with the H1N1 virus, we would strongly encourage that you follow the guidelines provided by the Minnesota State High School League, which states that:

"Infected individuals should stay home until signs and symptoms have resolved. Once it has been determined that the individual has not had a fever for 24 hours the individual can resume regular activities. The 24-hour no-fever timeline should be achieved naturally, without the aid of fever reducing medications."

If and when RYSA's governing bodies (Minnesota Youth Soccer Association, US Youth Soccer, United States Soccer Federation, etc.) develop guidelines, this statement may be changed and updated.

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