

Herpes Gladiatorum

What is herpes gladiatorum?

Herpes gladiatorum is a skin infection caused by the herpes simplex virus. It occurs often in wrestlers. It causes a rash that commonly appears on the face, neck, shoulder, and arms.

How does it occur?

An infected wrestler can pass the infection to an uninfected wrestler by skin contact.

What are the symptoms?

The herpes simplex rash is usually a cluster of blisters that may or may not be painful.

How is it diagnosed?

Your health care provider will examine your skin. He or she may do a culture to test for the herpes virus. Knowing that the rash is from the herpes virus may help your provider treat you.

How is it treated?

The rash usually lasts 7 to 10 days. It is important that you do not have skin contact with any uninfected person while you have the skin rash. Your health care provider may prescribe a medicine called acyclovir (Zovirax) in a pill or an ointment form to speed your recovery.

How can it be prevented?

It is important for you to watch for any rashes so you don't spread them to others. In many athletic leagues, wrestlers who have rashes are not allowed to compete. It is also important to routinely clean and disinfect wrestling mats.