

MEDICAL BREAKTHROUGHS **RESEARCH SUMMARY**

TOPIC: BACK TO THE GYM? HOW TO KEEP COVID AWAY
REPORT: MB #4762

INFECTIONS AND GYMS: Working out has many benefits, including weight control, disease prevention, and even mood improvement but germs can thrive at the gym. This could put gym-goers at risk for a variety of common skin infections, including ringworm, plantar warts, or impetigo, unless they take certain precautions. This is because bacteria, viruses, and fungi that cause infections to develop thrive in warm, moist places like sweaty exercise equipment and locker room showers. Infections you can contract at the gym include staph, athlete's foot, colds and flu, herpes, hot tub rash, **klebsiella, E. coli, streptococcal bacteria and even Legionnaires disease.**

Sources: <https://www.aad.org/public/everyday-care/skin-care-secrets/routine/prevent-skin-infections-at-the-gym>; <https://www.health.com/condition/skin-conditions/infections-germs-caught-at-gym>; <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/legionnaires-disease-florida-la-fitness-gyms/>)

CORONAVIRUS SHUTS DOWN GYMS: As of 2018, the fitness business was a 94 billion dollar industry. In late February, as the Coronavirus outbreak worsened, gyms took steps to protect customers, such as limiting class sizes and ramping up cleaning procedures. By mid-March, local ordinances started forcing many to close their doors as shared surfaces meant increased risk of spreading COVID-19. Some gyms started offering live-streamed workouts. But most were offered for free or directed donations to their instructors. Prior to the shutdown gyms were vigilant about cleaning and wiping down surfaces, having hand sanitizing stations and limiting class sizes.

(Sources: <https://www.nbcnews.com/business/business-news/gyms-are-eager-reopen-are-they-safe-n1186721>; <https://www.cnn.com/2020/04/01/business/fitness-studios-coronavirus/index.html>;

RE-OPENING: By mid-May many gyms were re-opening their doors. But to head back to the gym both the business and you need to have plan. For starters, plan to disinfect yourself and any surfaces you touch. The gym should have spray bottles with disinfectant but give it a minute to let it kill the germs before wiping. Disinfect weights, bars, benches, machine rails and knobs before and after use. Have a cloth or bleach wipe to sanitize. Wash your hands and use a hand sanitizer as soon as you walk in the door. Adhere to social distancing rules on machines. Make sure the gym is well ventilated. Bring your own water bottle and towels. The best tip, shower and change clothes at home.

(Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/13/well/move/coronavirus-gym-safety.html>)

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If this story or any other Ivanhoe story has impacted your life or prompted you or someone you know to seek or change treatments, please let us know by contacting Marjorie Bekaert Thomas at mthomas@ivanhoe.com