

IMPETIGO

Impetigo is a skin infection that is generally caused by one of two bacteria: Group A streptococcus or Staphylococcus aureus. Impetigo may develop if the child's skin has already been irritated or injured by other skin problems, such as eczema, poison ivy, insect bites, or skin allergy.

Signs and Symptoms:

Impetigo may affect skin anywhere on the body but commonly occurs in the area around the nose and mouth. The skin lesions usually begin as small blisters and red, fluid filled, rounded bumps that ooze and may have a flat honey-colored crust and may be itchy.

Contagiousness:

Impetigo is contagious and is spread by contact with a person who has a draining lesion or who is a nasal carrier. Children can spread impetigo from one area of the body to another when they touch themselves with fingers that have been in contact with scratched, infected skin. When someone has impetigo, the infection can spread to other household members on clothing, towels, and bed linens that have touched the person's infected skin. It can also be spread among playmates or classmates who come in contact with infected skin.

Treatment:

Impetigo treatment consists of appropriate skin care and antibiotic ointment, and/or oral antibiotic. Gently wash areas of infected skin with soap to remove loose crusts. (Bacteria live under the crusts.) Dry area and apply antibiotic ointment. Cover the area with loose sterile dressings or band-aids.

Call your child's doctor if your child's skin doesn't begin to heal after 3 days of treatment or if a fever develops. If the affected area becomes red, warm, or tender to the touch, notify your child's doctor.

School Exclusion Guidelines:

Children will be excluded from school until lesions have healed or **24 hours of antibiotic treatment has been completed**. Skin lesions should be lightly covered while in school.