



Impetigo

What is impetigo?

- Impetigo is a skin infection caused by bacteria.
- It usually affects preschool and school-aged children. A child is more likely to develop impetigo if they have irritated skin from eczema, insect bites, cuts or scrapes.

What are the signs of impetigo?

- Impetigo starts as a small blister that breaks open, leaving a raw spot on the skin. It usually appears around the nose, mouth and part of skin not covered by clothing.
- Yellowish fluid from the sore dries and forms thick, partly brown, partly honey coloured scabs. Impetigo can spread from one area of the skin to another by touching or scratching.

How does one get impetigo?

- Impetigo is very contagious. Someone in the household with impetigo can pass the infection to others by direct contact or through clothing, towels, and bed linens that

came in contact with the infected skin.

How is impetigo treated?

- Your doctor will prescribe antibiotic ointment or an antibiotic pill to treat impetigo. It's important to take the medication as prescribed.
- Wash areas of infected skin using an antiseptic soap. If an area has scabs, soak them in warm soapy water. It's better to remove the scabs this way and then apply the antibiotic ointment.
- To prevent the impetigo from spreading to other parts of the body, cover the infected areas with gauze and tape.

How is impetigo prevented?

- Keep the infected areas clean and dry.
- Try to keep children from scratching the infected area.
- Keep children's hands clean, and fingernails cut short and clean. Putting socks on a very young child's hands help prevent scratching.

- Wash your hands after touching your child's sores.
- Keep your child away from swimming pools and hot tubs until they finish treatment.
- Use a clean towel each time you dry your child to prevent sores from spreading to other parts of the body. Pat dry instead of wiping across the sores. If necessary, use paper towels instead of cloth towels.
- Do not share towels or face cloths among family members.
- Keep your child away from school, day care or other gatherings for 24 hours after the first treatment.

Visit your local health center or doctor if the sores do not improve or your child develops fever.

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