

Fact Sheet: Impetigo

What is Impetigo?

Impetigo is a skin bacterial infection usually caused by either group A streptococci or *Staphylococcus aureus*.

What are the symptoms?

- A blister-like rash found anywhere on the skin, usually around the nose, mouth, hands and arms.
- Thick, golden-yellow discharge that dries, crusts and sticks to the skin.

Symptoms may appear 4-10 days after exposure to the discharge.

How is it spread?

Impetigo is spread from person to person through direct contact with infected skin or other items such as clothing, towels, and bed linens that have been touched by the infected skin. It can also be spread to other parts of the body by scratching the blisters and touching other parts of the body. This infection can rapidly spread among persons in close contact, such as children in a child care facility or school.

How is it treated?

- Your doctor may prescribe antibiotic ointment or oral medication.
- Wear gloves while applying the antibiotic ointment and wash your hands afterwards.
- Infected areas should be washed with mild soap and running water.
- Encourage the infected child to wash hands frequently, and avoid touching or picking at the rash or scabs.
- An infected child should stay away from other children until 24 hours after the treatment has begun and the child no longer has a discharge.
- Wash the infected child's clothes, bedding, and towels at least once a day and never share them with other children.

How is it prevented?

- Avoid contact with known cases of impetigo.
- Wash hands frequently with soap and warm running water and teach your children to do the same.
- Wash toys, floors and other surfaces where children may play, with a bleach solution made fresh daily of 1 part bleach to 10 parts water.

This fact sheet is for information only and is not meant to be used for self -diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a health care provider. For more information call your health care provider or call Washtenaw County Public Health at 734-544-6700.

