

IMPETIGO

Definition:

- A bacterial infection of the skin caused by staph or strep, which causes skin sores with either a honey-golden crusting or large blisters
- A moist red base lies beneath the crusts or blisters
- May drain pus or ooze
- Spreads to other areas on the skin with small red bumps which then become pimples or blisters and finally the sores of impetigo
- Breaks in the skin predispose to impetigo
- Spots are usually less than one inch in diameter
- Area may be itchy or irritated but is not severely painful
- Generally does not cause fever

Spread By:

- Person to person contact
- Picking or scratching skin

Incubation:

- 1-10 days
- Contagious until under treatment with antibiotics for 24-48 hours

Treatment:

- Prescription antibiotic cream is used for mild or localized cases
- Antibiotics by mouth are used for more wide-spread cases; when antibiotics are given by mouth, creams are usually not necessary
- Usually heals in about one week, though pink discoloration on skin may last a few months

Home Care:

- Keep covered if possible
- Wash with antibacterial soap (Dial, Safeguard, Lever 2000) to remove crusting
- Cut fingernails short
- Use separate linens and launder in hot water daily for 48 hours
- May return to school after 24-48 hours of antibiotic treatment, unless new sores are appearing.

Reviewed 2/07, 11/07, 2/11, 11/13, 11/15