

IMPETIGO

Impetigo is a contagious skin infection often occurring on the nose, arms, or legs or around the mouth. This infection is common in young children.

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| CAUSE | <i>Streptococcus</i> and/or <i>Staphylococcus</i> bacteria, including Methicillin-resistant <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> (MRSA). |
| SYMPTOMS | Typically begins at a break in the skin (e.g., insect bite, cut). Sores form on the skin and produce a thick golden-yellow discharge that dries, crusts, and sticks to the skin. Rarely, problems such as kidney disease or cellulitis (skin infection) may develop if children do not receive proper treatment. |
| SPREAD | From person-to-person through touching the fluid from the sores. Rarely, through touching contaminated objects. |
| INCUBATION | It usually takes 1 to 10 days from the time a person is exposed until symptoms begin. |
| CONTAGIOUS PERIOD | Until sores are healed or the person has been treated with antibiotics for 24 hours. |
| EXCLUSION | <u>Childcare</u> and <u>School</u> : If impetigo is confirmed by a healthcare provider, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated and sores are drying or improving. |
| DIAGNOSIS | Recommend parents/guardians call their healthcare provider if their child has impetigo. |
| TREATMENT | Impetigo can be treated with topical antibiotics (applied directly to the skin) when only a few sores are present. Oral or injectable antibiotics may also be prescribed. |

PREVENTION/CONTROL

- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm running water after contact with sores. **Thorough handwashing is the best way to prevent the spread of communicable diseases.**
- Wear disposable medical gloves if applying ointment to sores or use cotton-tipped swabs.
- Cover sores whenever possible to prevent spread. Discourage children from scratching infected areas.
- DO NOT share towels, washcloths, or clothing.
- Clean and sanitize mouthed toys, objects, and surfaces at least daily and when soiled. (See pgs 34-36.)

For more information, call Hennepin County HSPHD-Epidemiology at (612) 543-5230 or call your local health department.