

## IMPETIGO

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

<b>CAUSE</b>	<i>Streptococcus</i> and/or <i>Staphylococcus</i> bacteria, including methicillin-resistant <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> (MRSA).
<b>SYMPTOMS</b>	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.
<b>SPREAD</b>	Spread from person-to-person through touching the fluid from the sores. Rarely, through touching contaminated objects (e.g., surfaces, clothing, bedding, towels).
<b>INCUBATION</b>	It usually takes 1 to 10 days from the time a person is exposed until symptoms begin. Symptoms usually begin 1 to 3 days after exposure to <i>Streptococcus</i> ; usually 4 to 10 days after exposure to <i>Staphylococcus</i> .
<b>CONTAGIOUS PERIOD</b>	Until sores are healed or the person has been treated with antibiotics for 24 hours.
<b>EXCLUSION</b>	<u>Childcare</u> and <u>School</u> : If impetigo is confirmed by a health care provider, exclude until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated and sores are drying or improving.
<b>DIAGNOSIS</b>	Recommend parents/guardians call their health care provider if their child has open sores or an undiagnosed rash.
<b>TREATMENT</b>	Impetigo is treated with topical antibiotics (applied directly to the skin) when only a few sores are present. Oral or injectable antibiotics may be prescribed for more severe cases.

### 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 or use cotton-tipped swabs if applying ointment to sores. Dispose of any soiled tissues, bandages, and gloves carefully.
- Cover sores whenever possible to prevent spread. Discourage children from scratching infected areas. Ask parents to trim child's fingernails.
- Do not share towels, washcloths, or clothing.
- Clean and sanitize mouthed toys, objects, and surfaces at least daily and when soiled (see Section 2).

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