

Impetigo: Brief Version

What is impetigo?

Impetigo is a skin infection. It is caused by Strep or Staph bacteria. It happens more often in the summer, when children get insect bites, cuts, and scrapes.

When your child has impetigo, you may see that:

- Your child has sores less than 1 inch across.
- The sores start as small red bumps that quickly change to cloudy blisters, then pimples, and then sores.
- The sores get bigger and don't heal.
- Soft, yellow-brown scabs cover the sores.

How can I take care of my child?

Your child will usually need an oral antibiotic.

- Ask your child's doctor if your child needs to take antibiotic pills.

Use antibiotic ointment. You can buy this without a prescription. Put the ointment on the sore 3 times a day. Use the ointment for 7 days, or longer, if needed.

When putting on ointment:

1. Soak off the scabs with warm water and an antibacterial soap. The bacteria live under the scabs. You need to take away the scabs so the ointment can work.
2. Put on the ointment.
3. Cover the sores with a Band-Aid if they are not on the face.

Make sure your child does not scratch the sore. This may cause it to spread.

Keep your child out of school until you have treated his sores for 24 hours.

Call your child's doctor right away if:

- Your child starts to act very sick.

Call your child's doctor within 24 hours if:

- The sores get bigger or there are more of them after 48 hours of treatment.
- Your child gets a fever or sore throat.
- The sores do not completely heal in 1 week.
- You have other questions or concerns.

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