

Impetigo

What is impetigo? It is a mild skin infection caused by bacteria. It is common in children around the nose and mouth after cold, in the diaper area, and on cuts and insect bites. It usually lasts one to three weeks with:

- Reddish sores that become oozing and crusty
- May be itchy

How does impetigo spread? It spreads by:

- Touching or scratching the sores on the skin
- Sharing towels, clothes, and bedding

When is impetigo contagious?

- As long, as the sores are oozing and moist and until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment is started.
- After exposure, it takes four to 10 days to develop the infection.

How do I know if my child has impetigo? If you see the rash, take the child to the doctor. Impetigo is diagnosed by how the rash looks.

What should I do if my child has impetigo?

Treatment: The doctor may prescribe:

- Washing sores with soap and water.
- Antibiotic medication to take by mouth and/or ointment for the sores.

Keep your child home: until 24 hours after the start of antibiotic treatment. Notify your Head Start program.

To limit the spread:

- Keep the lesions clean and dry.
- Wash hands after touching the lesions.
- Do not share clothes, towels, or bedding. Separate personal clothes and bedding in individual cubbies for each child.