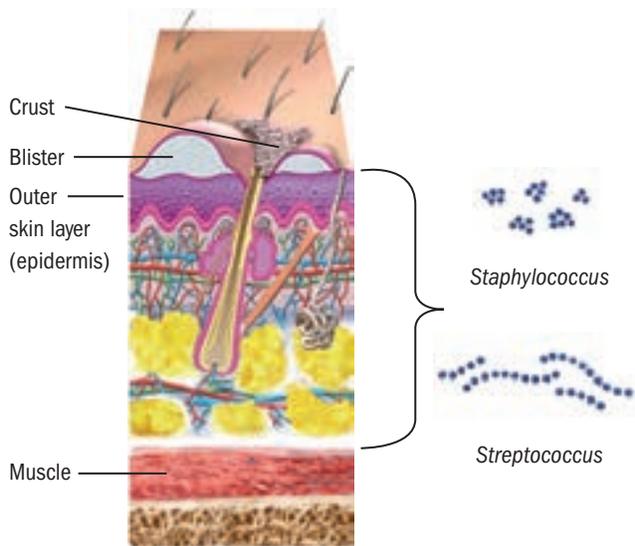


CARING FOR YOUR CHILD WITH IMPETIGO



Impetigo occurs most often in babies and children. It spreads easily among them, especially when they're crowded together.



Bacteria called *Staphylococcus* (staph) and *Streptococcus* (strep) cause impetigo. They normally live on the skin surface but can go deeper and cause infection.



Impetigo starts with painless blisters, usually on the face, especially near the nose and mouth. Blisters fill with clear or yellow fluid and crust over. If you notice these blisters on your child, you should go to the health care provider.

The health care provider will diagnosis your child from the look of the blisters and sores.



What Is Impetigo?

Impetigo is a very common, mild skin infection. It occurs most often in babies and children. It spreads easily from one person to another, especially when they're crowded together. Brothers and sisters and people who play contact sports can often get it.

What Causes Impetigo?

Two kinds of bacteria called *Staphylococcus* (staph) and *Streptococcus* (strep) cause impetigo, separately or together. These bacteria normally live on the skin surface, but they can get into top layers of skin and cause infection. Impetigo is more likely when skin is injured such as with scratching, scrapes, or insect bites.

Young children can spread it easily because they don't wash their hands that can have bacteria on them.

What Are the Symptoms of Impetigo?

Impetigo starts with painless blisters, usually on the face, especially around the nose and mouth. Blisters fill with clear or yellow fluid, eventually burst open, and leave a gold-color crust. Blisters may itch or burn. They don't usually leave scars.

Rarely, impetigo can lead to kidney inflammation, with blood or protein in the urine.

How Is Impetigo Diagnosed?

The a will make a diagnosis from the look of the skin blisters and sores on your child. Tests may be done to find out which bacteria are causing the infection. A swab may be used to take a sample of fluid inside a blister. Blood or urine tests may also be done in severe cases to be sure that bacteria haven't caused a complication.



Antibiotic skin creams or pills will kill the bacteria.

Have your child avoid close contact with others who have impetigo.



Call your health care provider if your child's urine is discolored or has blood in it.

Wash your hands often so that you don't pass on the infection. Bathe your child at least once daily.



How Is Impetigo Treated?

Impetigo should be treated quickly to keep it from spreading under the skin and preventing complications such as kidney damage. If left untreated, impetigo can persist for weeks.

Impetigo responds rapidly to medicine plus soaking and washing. Most cases go away within 7 to 10 days. Antibiotics, given as skin creams or pills, will kill the bacteria. Crusts that are left after blisters burst should be gently removed. The blisters are first soaked with a wet cloth. Then the area is washed with antibacterial soap.

DOs and DON'Ts in Managing Impetigo:

- ✓ **DO** have your child avoid close contact with others with impetigo.
- ✓ **DO** apply a prescription antibiotic cream inside your child's nose to help prevent impetigo from coming back if your child has frequent impetigo infections. Bacteria live inside the nose and can be carried on fingers.
- ✓ **DO** keep your skin clean and prevent passing on the infection by hand washing. Use an antibacterial soap.
- ✓ **DO** bathe your child at least once daily.
- ✓ **DO** thoroughly wash skin scrapes, cuts, and insect bites on your child.
- ✓ **DO** keep toys and other objects that your children play with clean.
- ✓ **DO** tell your health care provider if your child doesn't feel well while taking the antibiotic medicine.
- ✓ **DO** trim your child's nails if scratching is a problem.
- ✓ **DO** call your health care provider if your child isn't better in 7 to 10 days, your child has a temperature of 101° F even with treatment, other family members become infected, or your child's urine has blood in it.
- ⊗ **DON'T** let your child scrape or scratch the blisters.
- ⊗ **DON'T** let your child with blisters have close contact with others.
- ⊗ **DON'T** let your child with impetigo share washcloths, towels, or beds.

FROM THE DESK OF

NOTES

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact the following source:

- American Academy of Dermatology
- Tel: (847) 330-0230, (866) 503-7546
- Website: <http://www.aad.org>