



IMPETIGO

What is IMPETIGO?

Impetigo is a common infection of the skin resulting in blisters that may occur anywhere on the body but are usually observed around the nose and mouth. It is caused by one of two types of bacteria; either group A streptococci or *Staphylococcus aureus*.

Who gets impetigo?

Children and young adults are commonly affected. In adults, impetigo may follow other skin problems or after an upper respiratory tract infection. Impetigo occurs more in the hot, humid summer months.

What are the symptoms of impetigo?

Impetigo develops as an itchy rash or red sores that blister and then ooze. The sores may grow in size and spread. When blisters break, they form a flat, honey-colored crust.

How is impetigo spread?

Impetigo is spread person to person through direct contact with drainage from the blisters. Blisters appear 4–10 days after exposure.

How is impetigo treated?

Impetigo is usually treated with antibiotics. Special soaps or antibiotic ointments may also be prescribed.

What can a person do to minimize the spread of impetigo?

Impetigo is contagious. Follow all instructions from your healthcare provider. It is important to wash the rash with soap and water and to cover it loosely with a bandage. Frequent handwashing is important, especially after touching infected areas of the body.

A person with impetigo should avoid contact with newborn babies and should be excluded from school, daycare and food handling until 24 hours after starting antibiotic treatment. Avoid sharing personal items such as towels or wash cloths with someone who is infected.