

# FACTS ABOUT

## Impetigo

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Impetigo is a skin infection caused by Streptococcus (strep) and Staphylococcus (staph) bacteria. The infection is common in children and occurs when the bacteria gets into scrapes and insect bites. The infection is most common in the summer. Some people think that children get impetigo because they have not been washed properly. However, impetigo does not result from a lack of cleanliness.

Impetigo is a skin rash that is characterized by a cluster of blisters or red bumps. The blisters may ooze or be covered with a honey-colored crust. The rash usually appears around the nose, mouth, and parts of the skin not covered by clothes.

The infection is spread when someone touches an impetigo rash and then touches another person. The spread can be prevented by washing hands after touching infected skin. Treatment of impetigo with antibiotics can also prevent the spread of infection.

A physician can diagnose impetigo by examining the child. The specific germ causing the infection can be found when a culture (or swab) is taken by a physician. The infection is treated with antibiotics, which may be given by mouth or applied on the skin in the form of an ointment.

### Things Parents Can Do

- Watch your child for signs for impetigo if another child has it.
- If you think your child has impetigo, contact your physician for diagnosis and treatment.
- Make sure that all household members wash their hands thoroughly with soap and running water after touching.
- If your child has impetigo, he or she should not return to school until the antibiotic prescribed by your physician has been taken for at least one full day. It is important for the child to take all the medication prescribed by the physician, even after the signs of infection have gone away.

Adapted from Canadian Paediatric Society "Well Beings"

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