



One minute guide to...

IMPETIGO

What is it?

Impetigo is a very contagious but not serious disease. It often gets better in 7 to 10 days if you get treatment. Anyone can get it but it very common in young children. It starts with red sores or blisters and can be hard to see on black or brown skin. The sores burst and leave crusty, golden-brown patches on the skin. The patches can get bigger, spread to other parts of the body, itchy and sometimes painful.

How is it spread?

Impetigo can spread to other parts of the body or to other people until it stops being contagious.

It stops being contagious:

- 48 hours after starting to use the medication prescribed by a GP.
- When the patches dry out and crust over (if you do not get treatment)

How to stop it spreading or getting worse when still contagious:

- Stay away from school or work until it stops being contagious.
- Keep sores, blisters, and crusty patches clean and dry.
- If on the body keep covered with loose clothes or gauze bandages.
- Wash hands frequently with warm water and soap.
- Wash flannels, sheet and clothes on a high temperature.
- Wash, wipe down toys with warm water and detergent if children have impetigo.
- Do not have close contact with children or people with diabetes or weakened immune system (if having chemotherapy for example).
- Do not prepare food for other people.
- Do not touch or scratch sores, blisters, or crusty patches – this also helps stop scarring.
- Do not play contact sports like football or go swimming.
- Do not share flannels, sheets, or towels.

What to do?

If you think a child has impetigo, encourage parents or carers to take them to the GP. The GP will prescribe antibiotics if impetigo is diagnosed.

- Maintain good hand hygiene.
- Maintain good cleaning regimes.

Further Information:

NHS information <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/impetigo/>

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Working for Cumberland Council and
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