

Dear Parent/Guardian:

There has been at least one case of impetigo in your child's classroom. Please read the following information. If your child has symptoms of impetigo, please do not send him or her to school. Instead, please take your child to the doctor for an evaluation. If you have any questions, please contact me at (608)269-3151 ext. 6204 or (608)633-8508. Thank You!

Cortney Hesse, RN Sparta School Nurse

IMPETIGO FACT SHEET

WHAT IS IMPETIGO?

Impetigo is a highly contagious skin infection that usually appears on the face, especially around the nose and mouth. Although anyone can develop this infection, it mainly affects infants and children.

WHAT ARE THE CAUSES OF IMPETIGO?

Impetigo is usually caused by one of two types of bacteria, either staphylococcus aureus (staph infection) or Streptococcus pyogenes. Children are commonly infected through a cut, scrape, or insect bite, but they also can develop impetigo without having an injury to the skin.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF IMPETIGO?

Impetigo may start as a red bump, sore, or blister on the child's face. These will break and ooze either a clear fluid or pus that forms a honey-colored crust. The sores may itch but are not painful.

HOW DOES IMPETIGO SPREAD?

Impetigo is highly contagious and spreads easily by coming in contact with the sores of an infected person or with items they've touched, such as bed linen, towels, clothing, or toys. Infected people also spread the infection on their own bodies by touching or scratching the infection and then touching other areas of their face or body.

HOW IS IMPETIGO DIAGNOSED?

See your doctor if your child develops any unusual sores, especially if they contain fluid or pus. Although impetigo is not dangerous, it may lead to serious complications when it is not treated or controlled.

HOW IS IMPETIGO TREATED?

The treatments for impetigo depend on the child's age and the severity of the infection. Treatments include:

- Prescription strength antibiotic ointment such as Bactroban. It is applied directly to the sores.
- Oral antibiotics may be prescribed for more severe cases.
- Sometimes both an ointment and an oral antibiotic are prescribed.

HOW CAN IMPETIGO BE PREVENTED?

Children should bathe daily or every other day to keep their skin clean and healthy. Treat cuts, scrapes, and insect bites right away to prevent infection. If someone in the family has impetigo, the following measures should be taken:

- Gently wash the affected areas with mild soap and running water and then cover lightly with non-stick gauze.
- Wash an infected child's clothes, linens, and towels every day and don't share them with anyone else in the family.
- Wear gloves when applying any antibiotic ointment and wash hands thoroughly afterward.
- Cut an infected child's nails short to prevent scratching and encourage the child to wash his or her hands frequently.

KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME UNTIL AT LEAST 24 HOURS AFTER BEGINNING ANTIBIOTIC TREATMENT.