

GET THE FACTS

Impetigo

What is impetigo?

Impetigo is a skin infection caused by either Group A *Streptococcus* and *Staphylococcus aureus* bacteria. This page focuses on impetigo caused by group A *Streptococcus* (Group A strep). In addition to impetigo, Group A strep causes many other types of infections.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms of Impetigo include red, itchy sores, that later heal to form into crusty, yellow or “honey-colored” scabs.

How long does this disease last?

It usually takes 7-10 days for sores to appear after someone is exposed to the group A strep. Without treatment, the infection heals in 14-21 days (until active crusting lesions are gone) or after 24 hours on antibiotics.

How does impetigo spread?

Streptococcal Impetigo is commonly spreads through direct contact with individuals with impetigo. The bacteria can spread to others if an individual touches the infected individual’s sores or comes into contact with the fluid from the sores. Injuries or other infections, such as scabies, that lead to breaks in the skin, favor transmission.

Who is at risk for impetigo infection?

Children between the ages of 2 and 5 years are at risk of developing impetigo. Risk is highest in environments such as schools and daycares, in which many close contacts are gathered in the same space. Crowding and poor personal hygiene can also increase risk of developing impetigo.

What preventive measures and treatments are available?

Impetigo is highly infectious until treated the skin sores have been treated with antibiotic for 24 hours, or the crusting lesions have resolved. To prevent spread of illness, cover the sores, keep fingernails of the infected individual short, and wash hands carefully with soap and water. In addition, clean and sanitize contaminated surfaces.

Individuals showing symptoms should be evaluated by a health professional. Once the individual is treated, the affected area should be covered, and hand hygiene should be followed following changing of bandages.



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What should schools do?

- Notify exposed family and staff members
- Notify CDPH in the event of an outbreak (10 or more linked, lab-diagnosed cases, within a 10 day period)
- Refer affected individuals to their healthcare provider

What are recommendations for exclusion?

Individuals with impetigo should be excluded from school until 24 hours after treatment with an appropriate antibiotic as prescribed by their health care provider.

For more information, visit [Impetigo - All You Need to Know | CDC](#) or [Impetigo - Symptoms and Causes | Mayo Clinic](#). <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK430974/>



Source: [Impetigo: All You Need to Know | CDC](#)

