



Kapa'a Pediatrics, LLC

Impetigo

What is it? Impetigo is a highly contagious skin infection. It is usually caused by the bacteria Staphylococcus or Streptococcus. It can appear anywhere on the body, but tends to occur on the face, especially around the nose and mouth.

What are the symptoms? Two common forms are nonbullous and bullous impetigo.

- Nonbullous impetigo: small red bumps progress to pustules then break and form thick crusted edge that is classically honey colored, which occurs over a week.
- Bullous impetigo: due to Staphylococcus toxin A, causes larger blistering of the superficial skin layer. Usually there are only a few bullous lesions at a time.
- Generally impetigo is not particularly painful or itchy.

Treatment options: Topical or oral antibiotics can be used.

- Topical antibiotics are preferred over oral antibiotics for mild cases of impetigo. Mupirocin is a prescription cream that can be used 2 times per day for 5 days. In addition to the impetigo it is always a good idea to coat each nostril using a qtip, as this area often harbors the bacteria. Do NOT use over the counter neosporin as this can cause an allergic reaction.
- In addition to topical antibiotic cream you may also decide to do "Hibiclens rinses" or "Bleach Baths" every other day for 5 days. Please see the handout titled "Bleach Bath and Hibiclens."
- Do NOT use band aids, the adhesive on the band aid can cause the infection to spread. Wearing loose clothing over the sores is sufficient.
- Severe cases are treated with oral antibiotics and usually require an office visit.

Is it contagious? Yes! For mild impetigo, children can continue to attend school after treatment has started. For severe impetigo, child needs to take an oral antibiotic for more than 24 hours before returning to school.

When to call your doctor?

- Not resolving and spreading after 72 hours of treatment.
- Increased redness, red lines, or streaks extending from the sores.
- Development of a fever.

*** Patient handouts created by Kapa'a Pediatrics are intended to give parents the most common and pertinent facts about a certain issue. If there is ever any concern that your child was given an incorrect diagnosis or is not following the usual expected course for an illness please call us to speak with a physician. (808) 634-8011 ***