

Parent Information  
School Age Children

# Impetigo



## Your child has a rash that may be Impetigo.

Your child has a rash that may be impetigo. Impetigo is a skin infection caused by bacteria that often infects sores, insect bites and other skin rashes. **It is very contagious and can be spread easily to others.**

## Home Treatment for Mild Cases of Impetigo

If your child has one or two small impetigo sores, they may be able to be treated with a triple antibiotic ointment or cream that you can buy without a prescription. Ask your pharmacist to help you choose one that is right for your child. Read and follow the directions on the medicine label.

Before you put the medicine on your child's sores, remove crusty scabs by soaking all sores with warm water for 5 minutes. For sores on your child's face, you might consider putting a warm washcloth on the area with the sores to soften the scabs.

After soaking, wash the sores with a washcloth, warm water and an antibacterial soap such as Dial™ or Safeguard™. Then use a cotton swab or your clean finger to put a small amount of the triple antibiotic onto each of the sores. If your child has impetigo in the nose, it may be necessary to put a very small amount of ointment on a cotton swab and apply it to the sores in the nose.

### Wash your hands and your child's hands to avoid spreading the infection to other people.

Repeat the treatment three times a day, or as directed on the medicine package label.

## Keep Impetigo from Spreading to Others

Keep your child's towel and washcloth separate from towels used by other family members. Wash washcloths, towels, bedding and clothing with hot water. Dry with high heat or in the sun.

Keep your child's fingernails clean and cut short to keep him or her from scratching and spreading the rash.

Cover the sores if they are oozing or draining. Wash your hands carefully after changing bandages.

Your child will need to stay home from school or childcare. Your child can return to school or childcare 24 hours after antibiotic treatment is started and the rash starts to heal.

## When Do Children with Impetigo Need to See a Healthcare Provider?

Your child will need to be seen by a doctor or nurse practitioner if:

- The sores spread to another area of the body,
- There are more than just a few sores in one place,
- The sores become red, swollen or painful,
- The sores do not look like they are healing 1-2 days after medicine is started,
- Your child starts to feel sick, or
- Your child's temperature is 101° F or higher by mouth or 100° F or higher under the arm

**For additional information about exclusion when a child has impetigo, see the DPH Child Care and School Exclusion Lists of Contagious or Communicable Diseases at [www.dph.sc.gov/diseases-conditions](http://www.dph.sc.gov/diseases-conditions)**

**Brand names used in this document are only meant to be examples. SC DPH does not endorse any of the brand names in this document.**

Child's Name _____
School Nurse _____
Date _____
School _____
School Phone Number ( _____ ) _____



**SOUTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF  
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