

Impetigo Fact Sheet

"im-peh-TIE-go"

What is it?

- Impetigo: What you need to know
 - It is a skin infection caused by the same type of bacteria that cause strep throat, scarlet fever, and pneumonia.
 - It spreads easily from person-to-person. It is most common in young children.
 - You need medicine from a doctor to treat impetigo.

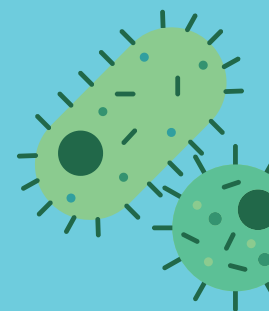
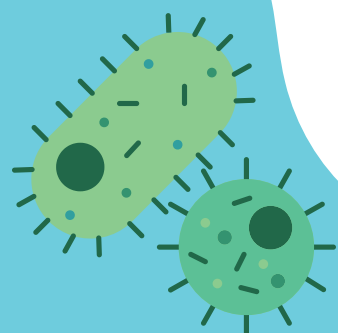
How does it spread?

- Impetigo causes sores on your skin.
- If someone touches your sores, or touches the liquid that comes out of them, they can get impetigo germs.



How do I know if I have it?

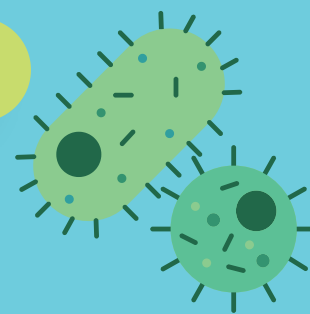
- If you have impetigo, you will get **red, itchy sores**. They're usually on "exposed" skin, meaning skin not covered by clothing.
- The sores will leak a clear liquid, or pus, for several days.
- As the sores heal, the scabs will be yellow, or "honey-colored."
- These sores do not leave a scar when they heal.



How can I protect myself?

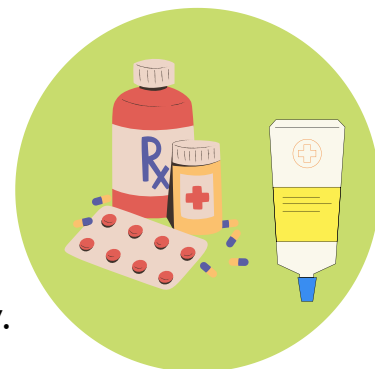


- Practice good hygiene:
 - Wash your hands, face, and body.
 - Wash your clothes after each wear.
 - Keep wounds clean and bandaged.
- Keep personal items to yourself and avoid kissing someone who has sores.



How can I take care of myself or someone who has Impetigo?

- Go to the doctor. They can give you two types of medicine:
 - Topical - a cream you put on your skin, OR
 - Oral - medicine you swallow.
- Medicine will help impetigo heal more quickly.
- It will also prevent the germs from spreading to more people, making them sick.



When should I see a doctor?



- Go to a doctor as soon as you think you have impetigo. They can tell what it is by looking at it, and usually do not need to do a test.
- You need the medicine from a doctor to treat impetigo.
- Treating impetigo is important so that it doesn't lead to other problems.

To learn more, visit the [Impetigo page](http://www.cdc.gov) at www.cdc.gov.