

Prevention and Control Measures: Impetigo

Transmission:

- Impetigo is a highly contagious skin infection caused by streptococcus (strep) or staphylococcus aureus (staph) bacteria that enters through breaks in the skin such as cuts, bites, burns, or wounds.
- Person-to-person: Open skin area has direct contact with the fluid that oozes from an impetigo blister.
- Contaminated articles-to-person: Open skin area is in contact with contaminated articles (such as bedding, towels, wash cloths, etc.)

Symptoms:

- Rash found anywhere on the skin, but most often on the face, lips, arms, or legs that spread to other areas.
- One or more blisters filled with pus, which are easy to pop.
- Itchy blisters filled with yellow or honey-colored fluid, which ooze and crust over.
- In infants, the skin is reddish or raw-looking where a blister has broken.

Prevention and Control Measures:

- Do not share towels, clothing, razors, or other personal care products with others.
- If you have impetigo, always use a clean washcloth and towel each time you wash.
- Avoid touching oozing blisters.
- Avoid contact with newborn babies who are at a higher risk of being infected.
- Keep blisters loosely covered to minimize the spread of infection.
- Wash your hands (soap with running water for 20 seconds) after touching infected skin.

Treatment:

- Your doctor will prescribe an antibacterial cream and possibly oral antibiotics.
- Wear gloves while applying the ointment and wash your hands (soap with running water for 20 seconds) afterwards.
- Wash the skin several times a day with antibacterial soap to remove crusts and drainage.
- Without proper treatment complications such as kidney damage or failure can occur.
- Children with impetigo should not return to school or day care until 24 hours after beginning antibacterial treatment or cleared by a healthcare provider.

For More Information: Visit [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) and type [Impetigo](#) in the SEARCH box.



Alabama Department of Public Health
Infectious Diseases & Outbreaks Division, 201 Monroe St, Montgomery, AL 36104
alabamapublichealth.gov/infectiousdiseases