



NOBLE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

44069 Marietta RD Caldwell, OH 43724-9124
PHONE: 740.732.4958 • TOLL FREE: 888.70.NOBLE • FAX: 740.732.5043 • E-MAIL: info@noblecohd.org

September 23, 2016

Dear Parent or Guardian,

There have been several cases of impetigo in your child's school. Although impetigo is not usually a serious condition, it is very contagious and must be treated correctly.

What is impetigo?

Impetigo is a bacterial infection of the skin caused by common skin germs called Streptococcus ("strep") and/or Staphylococcus ("staph"). Both types of bacteria can live on your skin and only cause trouble when the skin is injured by a cut, scrape or scratch.

What does impetigo look like?

It can cause small blisters on the skin which break and become covered with a yellow crust. Impetigo commonly affects the face but it can spread to other parts of the body especially if the skin is broken.

Who catches impetigo?

Anyone can catch impetigo, but most cases occur in crowded areas, such as children in schools or athletic teams.

How is impetigo spread?

Impetigo is usually spread by direct contact, such as skin-to-skin, with someone who is infected or indirectly by sharing towels, face cloths, clothes or toys that have been used by someone who is infected. The bacteria are found in the skin sores. Drainage from the sores is contagious. By touching the drainage, you can spread the bacteria to other parts of the body or to other people.

How is impetigo diagnosed?

Impetigo can usually be diagnosed by simply looking at it. If you think your child has impetigo, you should see your child's doctor for diagnosis and treatment.

How is impetigo treated?

Your doctor will usually prescribe an antibiotic ointment. Sometimes, if the rash is more severe or is spreading rapidly, an oral antibiotic will be needed.

Should children with impetigo be excluded from school?

Children with impetigo should stay out of school until the sores have stopped blistering and are crusting, or until 24 hours after starting the prescription.

Successfully serving the families of our community for more than 90 years

How can you stop the spread of impetigo?

- All cases of impetigo should be treated quickly and correctly.
- Children and household members should wash their hands often especially after touching the sores.
- Fingernails should be kept short.
- Children with impetigo should avoid touching the sores to prevent further spread.
- Cuts and scratches should be kept clean and covered with a bandage.
- Towels, razors and other personal items should not be shared.

For more information, contact your child's doctor or call the health department at 740-732-4958.

Sincerely,

Shawn E. Ray M.P.H. R.S.
SR.

Shawn E. Ray, M.P.H., R.S.
Health Commissioner