

Cause	Group A <i>Streptococcus</i> or <i>staphylococcus aureus</i> bacteria
Symptoms	<p>If caused by Group A streptococcus, it begins as reddened areas on the skin that peak to blisters that enlarge, rupture, and become covered with honey-colored gummy crusts. These crusts are easily removed, exposing moist red skin lesions underneath, which quickly will crust over again. The lesions may itch.</p> <p>If caused by staph aureus, there may be larger, fluid-containing blisters that first appear clear, then cloudy, and are more likely to stay intact longer on the skin without bursting.</p> <p>Fever is not usually associated with impetigo. Lesions may appear anywhere on the skin but are more common around the nose and mouth.</p>
Spread	Very contagious, through close contact with nasal discharges or purulent lesions; indirect contact with items as, used handkerchief, towels, napkins, pencils, toys, etc. Hands are the most important means of spread. Impetigo usually affects pre-school and school-age children, especially in the summer months.
Incubation Period	Variable, commonly 4-10 days.
Period of Communicability	Until sores are healed or the person has been treated with antibiotics for at least a full 24 hours.
Diagnosis	Clinical symptoms. Sometimes, culture of a tissue specimen.
Treatment	Topical antibiotics, applied directly to the skin when only a few lesions are present; oral or injectable antibiotics when there are more lesions.
Prevention/Control	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Careful handwashing with soap and running water by the infected person and those who have contact with them.2. Use antibacterial soap and separate towels or substitute paper towels for cloth ones until the infection is gone.3. The infected person should keep fingernails short.4. Separate bed linens, towels, and clothing from other household members; wash these items in hot water and dried with hot heat.5. When possible, cover the sores to prevent spread.
Exclusion	Until sores are healed or can be covered with a bandage and the person has been treated with antibiotics for a full 24 hours.