IMPETIGO

Impetigo is a contagious skin infection often occurring on the nose, arms, or legs or around the mouth. This infection is common in young children.

CAUSE *Streptococcus* and/or *Staphylococcus* bacteria, including Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA).

SYMPTOMS Typically begins at a break in the skin (e.g., insect bite, cut). Sores form on the skin and produce a thick golden-yellow discharge that dries, crusts, and sticks to the skin.

Rarely, problems such as kidney disease or cellulitis (skin infection) may develop if children do not receive proper treatment.

SPREAD From person-to-person through touching the fluid from the sores. Rarely, through touching contaminated objects.

INCUBATION It usually takes 1 to 10 days from the time a person is exposed until symptoms begin.

CONTAGIOUS PERIOD Until sores are healed or the person has been treated with antibiotics for 24 hours.

EXCLUSION Childcare and School: If impetigo is confirmed by a healthcare provider, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated and sores are drying or improving.

DIAGNOSIS Recommend parents/guardians call their healthcare provider if their child has impetigo.

TREATMENT Impetigo can be treated with topical antibiotics (applied directly to the skin) when only a few sores are present. Oral or injectable antibiotics may also be prescribed.

PREVENTION/CONTROL

- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm running water after contact with sores. **Thorough handwashing is the best way to prevent the spread of communicable diseases.**

- Wear disposable medical gloves if applying ointment to sores or use cotton-tipped swabs.

- Cover sores whenever possible to prevent spread. Discourage children from scratching infected areas.

- DO NOT share towels, washcloths, or clothing.

- Clean and sanitize mouthed toys, objects, and surfaces at least daily and when soiled. (See pgs 34-36.)

 For more information, call your school nurse.