

Skeltons Chemists

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Opening Times

Monday to Friday - 8.30am - 5.30pm

Saturday - 8.30am - 3pm

Sundays & Bank Holidays - Closed

Your FREE Healthy Living Leaflet for February 2024

1. What is impetigo?
2. Who can get it?
3. How long does it take to heal?
4. How many types of impetigo are there?
5. What is non-bullous impetigo?
6. What is bullous impetigo?
7. What is the treatment?
8. What if that doesn't work?
9. What if my impetigo comes back?
10. How can I prevent catching it again?



Answers on the bottom of P2

What is impetigo?

Impetigo is a skin infection that is very contagious but not usually serious. It often gets better in 7 to 10 days if you get treatment.

Anyone can get it but it's very common in young children. It starts with red sores or blisters, but the redness can be harder to see in brown or black skin so look at the palms of the hands or soles of the feet.

The sores or blisters quickly burst and leave crusty golden patches.

The patches can:

- Look a bit like cornflakes stuck to your skin.
- Get bigger.
- Spread to other parts of your body.
- Be itchy.
- Sometimes be painful.



Sores (non-bullous impetigo) can start anywhere but usually on exposed areas like your face and hands. Bullous impetigo causes fluid filled blisters often on the trunk, arms and legs of infants and children under 2. If you think you or your child might have impetigo, have had treatment for impetigo but the symptoms change or get worse, or had impetigo before and it keeps coming back, you should contact your GP.

Treatment for impetigo

Your GP will check it's not something more serious like cellulitis. If it's impetigo, they can prescribe hydrogen peroxide cream to speed up your recovery. If this does not clear it up they may prescribe antibiotic

cream or tablets.

If your impetigo keeps coming back your GP can take a swab from your skin to check for bacteria that causes impetigo. They may also take a swab from inside your nose. They then might prescribe an antiseptic body wash, nasal ointment, or both to try to clear the bacteria



and stop the impetigo coming back.

It is really important that you finish taking the antibiotic tablets, even if the impetigo starts to clear up because not finishing the course of any antibiotic can lead to bacteria resistance which means in the future antibiotics will stop working and many more people will die from what are now treatable infections.

Stop impetigo spreading or getting worse

Impetigo can easily spread to other parts of your body or to other people until it stops being contagious. This happens:

- a) 48 hours after you start using hydrogen peroxide cream or antibiotics prescribed by your doctor.
- b) When your patches dry out and crust over (if you do not get treatment).

To help stop impetigo spreading or getting worse while it's still contagious:

Do:

- ✓ Stay away from school or work.
- ✓ Keep sores, blisters, and crusty patches clean and dry.
- ✓ Cover them with loose clothing or gauze bandages.
- ✓ Wash your hands frequently:
 - 1) You should wash your hands for the amount of time it takes to sing "Happy Birthday" twice (around 40 seconds in total).
 - 2) Wet your hands with water, apply enough soap to cover your hands, rub your hands together, use one hand to rub the back of the other hand and clean between the fingers.
 - 3) Do the same with the other hand. Rub

your hands together and clean in between your fingers.

4) Grip the fingers of each hand together with the back of your fingers against the palms of your other hand. Rub your fingertips together and rub the back of your fingers against your palms.

5) Rub one thumb using your other hand. Do the same with the other thumb.

- 6) Rub the tips of your fingers on the palm of your other hand. Do the same with the other hand.
 - 7) Rinse your hands with water.
 - 8) Dry your hands completely with a disposable towel.
 - 9) Use the disposable towel to turn off the tap.
- ✓ Wash or wipe down toys with detergent and warm water if your children have impetigo.

Don't:

- ✗ Touch or scratch sores, blisters, or crusty patches - this also helps stop scarring.
- ✗ Have close contact with children or people with diabetes, or a weakened immune system (if they are having chemotherapy for example).
- ✗ Share flannels, sheets, or towels.
- ✗ Prepare food for other people.
- ✗ Go to the gym.
- ✗ Play contact sports like football.

How to avoid impetigo

Impetigo usually infects skin that is already damaged. To avoid spreading the infection to other parts of your body and to other people:

- ⇒ Keep cuts, scratches, and insect bites clean - for example by washing them with warm water and soap.
- ⇒ Get treatment for skin conditions like eczema.

For more information about this condition or any other health related topic, speak to a member of our trained team.

Answers: Q1, A skin infection. Q2, Anyone but it is very common in children. Q3, 7 to 10 days if you get treatment. Q4, 2 - non bullous and bullous. Q5, It begins with red sores around the nose and mouth. Q6, The symptoms begin with fluid filled blisters which usually occur on the central part of the body. Q7, The first line treatment is 1% hydrogen peroxide. Q8, An antibiotic cream or tablets can be prescribed. Q9, Your GP may take a swab from your skin to check for bacteria that is causing your impetigo. Q10, Being very careful with your hygiene.