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

INCUBATION (time from exposure to onset of symptoms)
Usually 1 to 10 days

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

EXCLUSION
Child care 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.
- 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.

For more information please contact Contra Costa Public Health at 925-313-6740 and visit our website at http://cchealth.org/impetigo/