



# ANDORRA PEDIATRICS

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## Treating Impetigo

- Impetigo is not a serious infection.
- Impetigo is a contagious skin infection.
- Impetigo is spread to other parts of the body when your child touches these infected sores and then touches other areas of his/her body or another child.
- Bacteria is normally present on your child's skin.
- If your child scratches a cut, insect bite, chicken pox, or poison ivy, this may result in the bacteria being introduced below the skin surface. This is how impetigo begins.
- Impetigo first appears as discolored spots.
- Small blisters form and quickly break, spreading bacteria-filled fluid to surrounding areas.
- The weeping lesions rapidly form yellow, honey-colored crusts or scabs and the tissue around the sores becomes red.
- The bacteria thrive in the moist environment under the crusts, and treatment of the infection requires frequent removal of the crusts and the application of antibacterial medication (Polysporin or Bactroban) directly to the infected areas on the skin.

### **To treat impetigo and prevent its spread, follow these instructions:**

1. It is essential to remove the crusts. Gently remove all crusts with anti-bacterial soap (Dial soap) and water. It may be easier to use a wash cloth soaked in warm water to help dislodge the crusty lesions.
2. Following each cleansing, apply the antibacterial medication to the affected areas. The ointment should be rubbed in well, including the area around the lesions. Apply 3-4 times per day.
3. Your child's fingernails should be trimmed short (if possible) and his/her hands washed often to avoid scratching and spreading the infection.
4. No one else should use the child's washcloth, towel or bed linen.
5. Apply the antibacterial medication to the opening of each of your child's nostrils. The nose is an area where bacterial can multiply rapidly. It is not uncommon for children to touch their nose, especially when they have a cold. Bacteria can be spread from the areas of impetigo to the nose and then to other areas of the body. This will help to prevent further spread of the infection.
6. Continue to apply the antibacterial medication for 1-2 days after the impetigo has healed.
7. Contact us if there is no improvement in 4 days, or if the lesions are spreading to other areas of the body.
8. Your child can attend school once treatment has been started.

This information should not be used as substitute for the medical care and advice of your child's physician. Health related topics found on the Andorra Pediatrics web site should not be used for diagnosing purposes or be substituted for medical

advice. As with any new or ongoing treatment, always consult your professional healthcare provider before making any changes in treatment or beginning any new treatment. If you have any questions or concerns, please call our office.