

Attention Parents/Guardians of Culpeper Public School Elementary Students:

The Culpeper community is experiencing an increase in impetigo cases. Impetigo is a contagious skin infection (caused by the streptococcus or staphylococcus bacteria) that causes red sores (blisters) on the skin, mostly on the face and hands. These blisters burst leaving a weeping, red rash that becomes crusted. The rash may be itchy, but is not painful. ***Impetigo requires treatment from your health care provider.***

The area health care providers believe the increase in impetigo cases is due to increased bacteria levels from pools and area lakes, and the extremely dry soil. Children are more likely to develop impetigo when their skin is already irritated by another condition such as eczema, poison ivy, insect bites, and cuts or scrapes. Scratching a sore or a rash is a common cause- for example, poison ivy can become infected and turn into impetigo.

These blisters need to be treated by your health provider who will use either an antibiotic ointment or a prescription for antibiotics. Do not allow children to pick or scratch the sores.

***The impetigo infection is contagious, so children with impetigo cannot attend school until approved to return by their health care provider.***

Prevention measures include frequent and thorough hand and face washing, and daily baths or showers. Pay special attention to skin injuries, keeping these areas clean and covered. Keep fingernails short. To prevent Impetigo from spreading among family members make sure everyone uses their own linens, towels, and clothing. Wash these items in hot water. Keep surfaces of your kitchen, dining areas, and bathrooms clean with a cleaning solution of 1 ounces bleach and 9 ounces water.

*Be advised increased cleaning is occurring in the elementary schools where cases of impetigo are being reported.*

Obtain more Information from:

American Academy of Pediatrics

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/skin/Pages/Impetigo.aspx>

American Academy of Dermatology

<https://www.aad.org/public/diseases/contagious-skin-diseases/impetigo>