Information Letter - Impetigo

November 3, 2015

Dear Parent/Guardian

A case of impetigo has been reported to the school district. Impetigo is a skin infection, common in young children and most often occurring on the face and around the mouth.

**Signs and Symptoms**
- Red sores that quickly rupture and ooze for a few days forming a yellow crust.
- Painless fluid filled blisters and itching
- Tenderness of the sores and swollen glands nearby are common.

**Causes**
Impetigo is caused by common skin germs called Streptococcus ("strep") and Staphylococcus ("staph"). Both types of bacteria can live harmlessly on your skin and only cause trouble when the skin is injured by a cut, scrape, or scratch. Bacteria flourish wherever groups of people are in close contact; impetigo spreads easily in schools and child care settings.

Other factors that increase the risk of impetigo include:
- Direct contact with an adult or child who has impetigo or with contaminated towels, bedding or clothing
- Participation in sports that involve skin-to-skin contact, such as football or wrestling
- Pre-existing chronic dermatitis, especially atopic dermatitis

**Treatment**
Impetigo may be treated with a prescription antibiotic ointment or an oral antibiotic to fight the germs causing the sores. Your doctor will decide what treatment is appropriate for your child. Sometimes the sores can be covered (depending on where they are on the body) to prevent spread.

**Prevention**
Impetigo can be prevented by avoiding direct contact with a contagious person and by careful hand washing with soap and water after contact with the sores. It's highly contagious, so just touching or scratching the sores can spread the infection to other parts of the body. The spread of impetigo can be prevented by prompt treatment of infection and by excluding infected children from school until after treatment has begun and covering lesions if possible.

We hope this information is helpful to you. If your child shows any of the above signs and symptoms, please keep him/her home and contact your physician and notify the school office. Please contact your medical provider with any questions.

Thank you,

Paul J. Coenen
Ithaca School Principal