Dear Parent,

This letter is to inform you that your child may have IMPETIGO and needs to be examined by a doctor.

What is impetigo?

Impetigo, a contagious skin infection that usually produces blisters or sores on the face and hands, is one of the most common skin infections among kids. It is generally caused by one of two bacteria: group A streptococcus or staphylococcus aureus. Impetigo usually affects preschool and school-age children. Impetigo may affect skin anywhere on the body but commonly occurs around the nose and mouth, hands, and forearms.

Signs and Symptoms

When impetigo is caused by group A streptococcus, it begins as tiny blisters. These blisters eventually burst and leave small wet patches of red skin that may weep fluid. Gradually, a tan or yellowish-brown crust covers the affected area, making it look like it has been coated with honey or brown sugar. Impetigo that is caused by staphylococcus aureus triggers larger fluid-containing blisters that appear clear, then cloudy. These blisters are more likely to stay intact longer on the skin without bursting.

Is it contagious?

Yes, impetigo is contagious and can spread to anyone who comes into contact with infected skin or other items, such as clothing, towels, and bed linens that have been touched by infected skin. Impetigo may itch and can be spread by scratching. Kids can spread the infection by scratching it and then touching other parts of the body.

Should I contact the doctor?

Yes, you should schedule an appointment for your child to be examined by a doctor. When it just affects small areas of the skin, impetigo can usually be treated with antibiotic ointment. But if the infection has spread to many areas of the body, or the ointment isn’t working, the doctor may prescribe an antibiotic pill or liquid. It’s important to make sure that your child takes the medication as the doctor has prescribed it. If your child is already being treated for impetigo, keep an eye on the sores and call the doctor if the skin doesn’t begin to heal after 3 days of treatment or if a fever develops. If the area around the rash becomes red, warm, or tender to the touch, notify the doctor as soon as possible.

My child has impetigo—do I need to keep him/her home from school?

Yes, you will need to keep your child home from school until he/she has been examined by a doctor, treatment has been started and written permission has been obtained from the doctor for your child to return to school.

Please don’t hesitate to contact me should you have any questions. Reference: http://www.kidshealth.org