

Norfolk mom says toddler has skin infection after swimming in Sandbridge

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VIRGINIA BEACH, Va. - A Norfolk mom says her 2-year-old daughter developed a bacterial skin infection after spending a few days in Sandbridge.

Mandy Gaddis says her toddler, Annabel, was staying with her father in Sandbridge and was swimming in the ocean on and off. She had a cut on her lip from falling some time before.

Gaddis says Annabel's father noticed a small rash around her mouth, which he thought was a reaction to sunscreen.

By Wednesday, red welts spread all over her face, chest, and arms.

"My immediate knee-jerk reaction was do we call an ambulance? I thought, was this such an allergic reaction that it could be going into her throat?"

Gaddis says she immediately brought Annabel to the doctor and told him about the [story News 3 previously aired about 6-year-old Bella](#).

According to Bella's mother, she developed impetigo, a bacterial skin infection, after swimming at Huntington Beach in Newport News with a cut on her face.

"The doctor went and looked the story up himself and he was like yep, this is the same thing," says Gaddis. "He did say that most likely it came from the ocean but of course they can't conclusively say that."

Doctor Gregory Pierce, a physician at Patient First, says swimming is just one way to contract impetigo, but it is usually caused by bacteria that is already on the skin.

He says there does not have to be a break in the skin for the infection to develop, but it does make it easier.

"Always be cautious if there is a break in the skin, always make sure the area is clean, make sure it's dry, make sure it's covered," says Dr. Pierce.

According to the Virginia Beach Health Department, there have been no advisories for the waters at Sandbridge this season. The ocean water is tested once a week in five different areas.

Gaddis says Annabel has to use a topical antibiotic to get rid of the infection.

"My biggest worry was drowning, or sharks, or getting lost at the beach, never crossed my mind she would have to worry about a bacterial infection."