

BOIL

A boil is a pus filled infection of the skin. It usually starts as an infection in a hair follicle and spreads in the surrounding area.

Causes

- Usually caused by Staphylococcus bacteria through direct skin contact with infected persons or surfaces.
- Bacteria called Staphylococcus aureus are the usual cause.
- More common in kids with diabetes, malnutrition, or other reason to have their immune system not working at full strength.

Signs

- Begins with swelling or redness of the skin.
- The center of the infection liquefies as pus collects.
- Boils are 1-5 cm in size, and are painful.

Prevention

- Wash hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and water.
- Take a bath at least once a day.

Treatment

- Do not touch the boil with dirty or bare hands.
- Never squeeze a boil, as this could well spread the infection.
- Apply warm compress to relieve pain.
- Cover the boil temporarily if it is in danger of getting dirty.
- Some boils may need to be opened and drained and may need antibiotics.
- Consult a physician if the boil does not drain itself.