



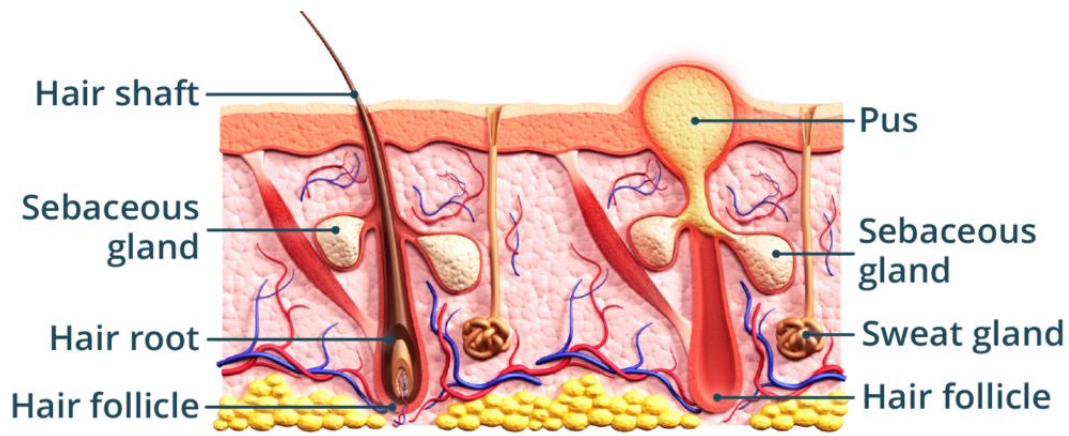
Furuncles (Boils)

(Painful, deeper infections around hair follicles)

What Are Furuncles (Boils)?

A **furuncle**, commonly called a **boil**, is a painful bacterial infection that starts in a hair follicle and extends deeper into the skin. Boils often look like red, swollen, tender bumps that may fill with pus.

Boils are commonly caused by **staph bacteria**, including sometimes **MRSA**.



What Do Boils Look and Feel Like?

Common signs include:

- Red, swollen bump
- Pain or tenderness
- Warmth around the area
- Pus or drainage
- A “head” forming in the center
- Sometimes fever or fatigue if infection is more severe

Common locations:

- Face
- Neck
- Armpits
- Buttocks
- Thighs
- Groin

What Causes Boils?

Boils can develop when bacteria enter through:

- Small cuts
- Ingrown hairs
- Shaving irritation
- Friction from clothing
- Scratching or eczema
- Blocked or inflamed follicles

How Are Boils Treated?

Treatment depends on size and severity.

Mild or early boils

- Warm compresses
- Avoid squeezing
- Careful monitoring

Larger or painful boils

- Prescription antibiotics in selected cases
- **Incision and drainage (I&D)** if pus is trapped
- Culture testing if MRSA is suspected or infections recur

Pre-Op Instructions

Before evaluation or possible drainage

- Do not squeeze, lance, or pop the boil at home.
- Apply warm compresses if recommended.
- Tell us if you have diabetes, immune suppression, fever, or recurrent boils.
- Tell us if you take blood thinners or have medication allergies.
- Arrive with clean skin and avoid applying thick ointments right before the visit.

Post-Op Instructions

After treatment or incision and drainage

- Keep the area clean and covered.
- Wash hands before and after wound care.
- Change dressings as directed.
- Complete antibiotics if prescribed.
- Avoid squeezing or picking.
- Avoid sharing towels, razors, or clothing.

Call the office if:

- Redness spreads
- Fever develops
- Pain worsens
- Drainage increases significantly
- The boil returns or new boils appear

Furuncles / Boils FAQ

Is a boil the same as a pimple?

No. A boil is deeper, more painful, and usually caused by bacterial infection around a hair follicle.

Can I pop a boil at home?

No. Squeezing can push infection deeper and increase scarring or spread.

Do all boils need antibiotics?

No. Some improve with warm compresses or drainage. Antibiotics depend on severity, location, and risk factors.

When does a boil need drainage?

If it is large, very painful, soft/fluctuant, or not improving, it may need incision and drainage.

Are boils contagious?

The bacteria can spread through drainage or shared towels/razors, so hygiene and wound coverage are important.

What is MRSA?

MRSA is a type of staph bacteria resistant to some antibiotics. It can cause boils and abscesses but is treatable with proper care.

Why do I keep getting boils?

Recurrent boils may be related to staph colonization, friction, shaving, diabetes, immune factors, or household spread.