



## Hidradenitis Suppurativa (HS)



### Overview

This chronic condition, which we call "HS," causes painful, boil-like lumps under the skin. They tend to form in areas where the skin rubs together. Often, they form in the armpits and groin.

### Causes

What causes this condition? Well, we know it results from blocked hair follicles. But we don't know why some people get these blockages. It's not from poor hygiene. And it's not a disease you can catch from someone else. Instead, HS may be linked to things like genetics, hormones and environmental factors.

### Symptoms

What are the symptoms? You develop small pitted areas of skin that contain blackheads. Over time, they turn into large red lumps filled with pus. They may be painful and itchy. They break open and drain. After they drain, they can be slow to heal. And even after they heal they may come back again. This leads to scarring and tunnels beneath your skin. Over time, this disease can get worse.

### Risk Factors

Who's at risk? HS tends to develop after puberty. It's more common in women, obese people and smokers. You also have a higher risk if you have a family history of the disease.

### Treatment

How do we treat it? We may recommend lifestyle changes, like wearing looser clothing and avoiding heat and humidity. You may need to lose weight. And if you smoke, quit. We can also give you medicines that you apply to your skin or take by mouth. If your symptoms are severe, you may benefit from surgery. Your healthcare provider will create a plan that's right for you.