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A Simple Guide to Skin Diseases, Impetigo and Other Infections (A Simple Guide to Medical Conditions)

Kenneth Kee

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What are Skin Infections?

Bacterial skin infections are most common bacterial skin infections seen by the family physician.
Abscesses

Skin infections are part and parcel of the types of diseases seen by family doctors.

Scratching of the skin is one of the causes of breakage of the protective skin layer and infection from germs caught in the

finger nails can enter the broken skin and cause pus formation in the skin.

Abscesses are easily formed in any part of the body.
Most large abscesses require incision (a cut into the abscess) and drainage to release the pus collected to prevent infection

spreading further and causing septic shock.

One memorable case was a small 3 year old girl who developed a large abscess on her scalp.
There was no other way except to incise and drain the large abscess.
She was very brave and cried once when the needle for local anesthetic injection entered the skin to provide local

anesthetic. Then the knife was used to open the abscess and the pus was allowed to drain out.
After that she had the wound bandaged and given antibiotics, painkiller and antibiotic cream.
Although she was told to wash her hands and not use them to scratch her head, she had a recurrence 2 years later and had the

same procedure done on her again.
Since then she did not have any more skin infection.

Infected acne can occur in adolescent boy or girl through hand contact with the acne.
Antibiotics and antibiotic creams may be necessary for the treatment of the infected skin.
The best antibiotics are those of the tetracycline group and erythromycin.

In housewives, a common infection is paronychia of the finger nails – infection of the side of the fingernail due to pressure

or injury to the side of the nail.
Very often the patient will have an abscess of the side of the nail by the time she sees a doctor.

The abscess is usually pricked with a sterile needle to release the pus which normally causes pain due to pressure on the

nail.This is followed by antibiotic and antibiotic creams.

Infection of the naval is very common in babies and is usually treated with antibiotic powder or creams.
Less often infection of the navels may occur in adults due to attempts at removing dirt in deep navels.

I had an elderly female patient who was actually referred to me by another family doctor who was unsuccessful in getting rid

of the pus discharge from her navel despite antibiotic treatment. There was an abscess in the lower part of the navel which

was discharging pus. I had to incise the abscess completely and do daily antibiotic dressing of the navel until she was

completely cured.

Worst Skin Infection

The worst infection I had seen in my family practice was that of the infected toe of a lorry driver.

He was dirty and smelly and obviously had not bathed for several weeks.
He complained of pain and swelling in his right big toe which was obviously very infected.
So what I did was removal of the pus in the wound.
What came out besides the pus were maggots about almost a hundred of them. I had to catch these wriggling maggots one by one until I finally reach the bottom of his wound.
I cleaned the wound and did daily antibiotic dressing for about 2 weeks before the wound finally recovered.
I also advised the patient to bathe daily.
It was obvious that there was total neglect of his wound that allowed flies to lay eggs in the wound resulting in the maggots.

All skin infections can be treated if you are persistent with daily cleaning and antibiotic dressing of the wound.

However in Diabetes there is always the danger of the wound spreading in uncontrolled diabetes which may require amputation to stop the infection from spreading.

It is important to emphasize to any patient with skin infection never to scratch or touch their skin with hands which may be dirty and full of germs.

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