

RECURRING, PAINFUL LUMPS OR BOILS?

Does this sound familiar?

AREAS
USUALLY
AFFECTED

Armpits

Under
Breasts

Groin

Buttocks



MedAction

It could be a skin disease called HS.

HS (Hidradenitis Suppurativa) is a chronic skin disease that affects 1-4% of the population.

HS is a disease of the hair follicles which become blocked and inflamed. The armpits, groin, area on or between the buttocks or under the breasts are most commonly affected by HS.

In mild cases, HS can consist of a few small bumps or cysts on the skin that keep coming back (recur).

More severe or progressive cases of HS can be debilitating, causing recurring painful boils that may connect together under the skin or release fluid and produce an unpleasant odour.

The reason why some people get HS is not fully understood. HS is believed to be caused by inflammation occurring within the body, and this may be related to problems with the immune system.



The average age of HS development is the early 20s, although HS has also been seen in children.

What you need to know.

HS is often confused with other skin conditions or infections and patients may suffer for several years before finally getting a proper diagnosis.

Studies have shown that HS is a condition that can severely impact quality of life, causing:

- Debilitating pain or discomfort
- Difficulty with normal daily activities, such as dressing, lifting things, walking or sitting
- Difficulties at work, lost workdays and, in some cases, unemployment
- Embarrassment from the sight or smell of their condition, leading to isolation
- Anxiety or depression

The good news

The good news is that knowledge of HS has improved dramatically in recent years.

Clinical guidelines have been developed for HS and medical research is leading to more effective management approaches. Early diagnosis and proper management can help reduce the suffering associated with HS.

If you have symptoms that suggest HS, speak to a dermatologist. They have the expertise and experience to make an accurate diagnosis and ensure you receive suitable medical treatment.



Dermatologists are the most qualified to diagnose and treat HS.

Ask your general practitioner for a referral to a dermatologist.

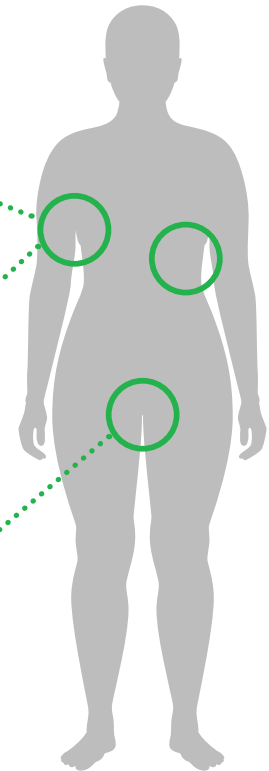
Could you be suffering from HS?

“ Sometimes the pain is excruciating and I’m unable to work or engage in activities. ”

“ Flare-ups are random so you cannot predict when one is coming or how bad it will be. ”

“ My body is covered in boils and I feel miserable. ”

“ The sense of shame that goes along with this disease is overwhelming. ”



What you can do.

If you believe you may have symptoms of HS, it's important to speak to a dermatologist as soon as possible.

Answering these questions can help your dermatologist diagnose your skin condition:

1 Have you had outbreaks of boils during the last 6 months?

- Yes
- No

2 If yes, where were the boils and how many did you have?

- Armpit: _____
- Groin: _____
- Genitals: _____
- Under the breasts: _____
- Other, e.g.: neck, abdomen, anal area: _____

3 Have the boils been painful?

- Yes
- No

4 Do the boils (or lumps) come and go (recur)?

- Yes
- No

Ask your general practitioner for a referral to a dermatologist.

For more information on HS visit the Canadian Skin Patient Alliance at: www.canadianskin.ca

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