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What are furuncles and carbuncles?

Medically reviewed by [University of Illinois](#) on January 9, 2018 — Written by [Yvette Brazier](#)

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A skin abscess happens when pus collects in hair follicles, skin tissues, or under the skin. A furuncle, also known as a boil, is a painful infection that forms around a hair follicle and contains pus.

A carbuncle is collection of boils that develop under the skin. When bacteria infect hair follicles, the follicles can swell and turn into boils and carbuncles.

A furuncle starts as a red lump. It may be tender. The lump rapidly fills with [pus](#), and as it grows it may burst.

Furuncles, boils, and carbuncles typically affect the thighs, armpits, buttocks, face, and

