

DEFINITION

1. **Superficial folliculitis** is a condition in which there are inflammatory changes affecting the hair follicles.

CLINICAL MANIFESTATIONS

2. The lesions present as small follicular papules or pinhead pustules. They are rarely painful. Sometimes small crusts cover a red, protruding follicular orifice.
3. Isolated lesions on the neck and beard are frequent and heal so rapidly that they are commonly ignored.
4. More persistent papules and pustules frequently occur on the thighs and buttocks of adolescent males and occasionally females, especially those with acne. They are usually too small or too few to have attracted the patient's attention.
5. Superficial folliculitis is a feature of three clinical syndromes -
 - 5.1. **Follicular impetigo of Bockhart** is an infection of the superficial follicle with *Staphylococcus Aureus*, commonly occurring in childhood on the scalp and limbs.
 - 5.2. **Chronic folliculitis of the legs** is a profuse eruption of superficial and deep follicular pustules of the thighs and legs of young adult males in India, which persists for many years.
 - 5.3. **Disseminate and recurrent infundibulofolliculitis** is a widespread recurrent eruption of follicular papules on the trunk and limbs occurring in Negroes.

AETIOLOGY

6. Infection of the superficial part of the follicle by *Staphylococcus aureus* is a common cause but other organisms including *P. acnes*, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* and *Pityrosporum* spp. may be involved. Follicular pustules may occur in ringworm.
7. Physical or chemical injury to the skin may produce folliculitis which can be sterile or secondarily infected by *Staph. Aureus*. Occupational exposure to mineral oils or therapeutic contact with tar products can produce oil-plugging of many follicles with an associated folliculitis. Sterile folliculitis is common beneath adhesive plasters or dressings

CONCLUSION

8. Superficial folliculitis is an inflammation of the superficial part of the hair follicles, which may be the result of a primary infection or secondary to physical or chemical injury to the skin. It may also occur as a feature of other skin disorders.

REFERENCES

Hight A S, Hay R J and Roberts S O B. Bacterial Infections – Superficial Folliculitis. In: (Eds) Champion R H, Burton J L and Ebling F J G. Textbook of Dermatology. Oxford. Blackwell Scientific Publications. 5th Ed. 1992. p973-974.