

Boils

A boil starts as a red lump or pimple with red skin around it. A boil can have white or yellow pus in the centre. It might be itchy or a bit painful. A boil usually starts around a hair follicle (where a hair grows out of the skin).



What to do

- **Go to the doctor immediately if a boil is near the eye.**
- Check and clean boils every day.
- Soak the boil in a warm bath or put a towel soaked in warm water on the boil for 20 minutes.
- If boil bursts, wipe away pus, fluid or blood with clean cotton wool or a cloth soaked in water and antiseptic.
- Wash cloths and towels after each use .
- Make sure your child wears clean clothes every day.
- Wash your hands before and after touching the boil.
- Check the rest of the family for boils.

How are boils spread?

Boils are spread by fluid, blood or pus from a boil touching other skin.

Time off from kura or school

If your child is feeling well they can go to kura or school but keep boils covered with plasters or dressings.

What to do if the boil gets worse

A large, deep boil is called an abscess (you say, ab-ses).

Go to the doctor immediately if the boil is near the eye

Go to the doctor if any of these things happen:

- the boil is bigger than a 10 cent coin
- the boil lasts longer than a week
- the boil is very painful
- red streaks start to appear on the skin around the boil
- there are a lot of boils or your child has boils regularly
- if your child seems unwell or has a fever

A doctor might:

- Drain the pus from a boil
- Give your child antibiotic tablets or a cream to put on the boil



It is important to take the antibiotics each day until they are finished, even if the boil has got better. The antibiotics need to keep killing the infection in the body after the skin has healed.