

# Hidradenitis Suppurativa

**Hidradenitis suppurativa is a chronic disease of the sweat glands that cause skin inflammation.**

It happens mainly in locations on the body where there are a lot of hair follicles and sweat glands, such as the groin, armpits, and breasts. It is a recurring process that can start as a swollen, red and sometimes painful bump. There may be one bump or several at a time. It may take days or weeks for the pain and swelling to go away. An anti-inflammatory medicine such as Ibuprofen (Motrin®) may help.

Sometimes the bumps fill with pus or fluid. The bumps may drain on their own or may need to be drained by a medical provider. This is a chronic condition with periods of flare up and periods of rest.

The exact cause of Hidradenitis is not known. It is more common in females. It occurs after puberty. Hidradenitis may be triggered by weight gain, hormones, stress, and smoking. Poor hygiene does not cause Hidradenitis.

## What You Can Do to Help

- Do not wear tight fitting clothing.
- Do not shave the area.
- The bump may have drainage that has an unpleasant odor. Put topical antibiotic ointment and a gauze dressing over the bump if it is draining.
- Wash the wounds in the bath or shower with mild soap and water.
- Follow the wound care instructions provided by your nurse or doctor.
- If you are being treated by the Pediatric Acute Wound Service (PAWS), please call **(314) 454-7297** with any questions. If you are not currently being treated by PAWS, then speak with your regular doctor.

### For General Health Information and Resources:

Call or visit the [Family Resource Center](#), a health information library on the 3rd floor of the hospital. Call 314.454.2350, email at [frc@bjc.org](mailto:frc@bjc.org), or check out the FREE [St. Louis Children's Hospital Kid Care App](#).

