

HOT TUB FOLLICULITIS

Hot tub folliculitis is a form of a skin infection. The folliculitis refers to the appearance of the eruption as small red bumps or pus head bumps around hair follicles. One of the common ways to acquire this infection is from a hot tub but it has been associated with other types of water exposure. It is a superficial skin infection that does not cause serious or internal problems. It is not contagious from person to person but is contagious from the water source you encountered.

A type of bacteria called pseudomonas usually causes this type of folliculitis because it can grow in water. This bacteria enters your skin through the hair follicles or from small breaks in your skin from rubbing up against the side of the hot tub. The bacteria is more common in water with low chlorine / bromine levels or a high pH.

The skin eruption normally appears within hours or up to two days after coming in contact with the bacteria in the water source. At first the eruption may be itchy and then progresses to small red bumps many of which can have small pus head centers. The folliculitis condition heals without scarring but temporarily the skin may be off color after the eruption heals.

In most cases this skin eruption will resolve on its own but topical treatment or oral treatment may help speed resolution. I will determine your individual treatment based on the extent of your eruption and the symptoms.

Since this eruption is caused by a water source it is important to properly maintain the hot tub or whirlpool where it was acquired. This entails frequent checking of the bromine or chlorine levels. If this is done properly the infection will not come back.

If you have any other questions regarding this condition please do not hesitate to ask before you leave the office.