



Arizona State
Board of Cosmetology

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FAQs regarding Skin Infection and Whirlpool Footbaths (Thanks, in part, to California Bureau of Barbering & Cosmetology.)

What happened?

California health officials received complaints about a large outbreak of skin boils which were traced back to a single nail salon in which footbaths had not been properly cleaned. There are, however, varied causes for this condition such as gardening, hot tubs, and _____, to name a few. At this time, no case of the skin boils has been definitely traced back to an Arizona salon.

What do these skin infections look like?

These skin boils usually start out looking like a spider bite that gradually grows in size and eventually produces pus. Boils sometimes become open wounds and may leave scars.

What causes these infections?

These infections are caused by *mycobacterium fortuitum* and other related mycobacteria. We come into contact with this type of bacteria everyday as it is found normally in water and soil.

How common are these types of skin infections?

Such infections are relatively rare. If salon whirlpool footbaths are cleaned and disinfected properly and in accordance with Arizona State Board of Cosmetology instructions which follow this page, the risk of these infections occurring in a salon setting is very small.