



DERMATOPATHOLOGY

# INFECTIVE DERMATOPATHOLOGY: ESSENTIALS FOR CLINICAL PRACTICE

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Infection is one of the major causes of morbidity and even mortality worldwide. In dermatology, skin infection can be primary cutaneous, or less often secondary to a systemic infection that can present with skin manifestations. Many cases of cutaneous infections are diagnosed clinically, while others require special tests for confirmation including skin biopsy. Either way, suspicion by the clinician or the pathologist is key for the diagnosis and subsequently correct treatment.

Skin pathology can be an asset for the clinician if a cutaneous infection is suspected. Adding to the complexity, variety, and increasing international travel that make skin infections increasingly difficult to recognize, they also can have variable clinical and pathological morphologies. A number of factors influence the histopathological features of a cutaneous infection; including the virulence and number of organisms, host immune response, the stage of the disease, treatment given, secondary changes due to rubbing or scratching, and superimposed infection. Depending on the pathological picture aided with various special stains, a diagnosis can be made in difficult cases. More specialized techniques or cultures are sometimes required to reach a definitive diagnosis.

In this presentation, I will highlight the pathological features of some of the most frequent cutaneous infections. In the second part of my talk, I will share a few interesting and more challenging cases from our practice.

