Infections of the skin can be caused by bacteria, fungus, virus and rarely parasites. Bacterial skin infections can be mild like impetigo and folliculitis, managed with topical medications, or severe – like abscess and necrotizing fasciitis requiring surgery, hospitalization and intravenous antibiotics.

Over the last decade, there has been an increase in the number of severe bacterial skin infections - often associated with methicillin-resistant-staphylococcus-aureus (MRSA) - resulting in increased number of visits to emergency rooms. There is also a trend towards increasing hospital admissions for skin and skin-structure infections resulting in increased health-care costs. Host factors like diabetes, peripheral vascular disease as well as obesity contribute to the morbidity associated with these infections. Surgical site infections deserve special attention as the organisms associated with these are often acquired from the health-care environment.

Early intervention with appropriate antibiotics results in improved outcomes. Deep wound cultures help target antibiotics to the organism identified. Outpatient intravenous antibiotic therapy (OPAT) has helped reduce duration of hospital stay.

Vancomycin is considered the “gold-standard” for management of MRSA infection, but newer oral and intravenous antibiotics with improved safety profiles have expanded options for management of these infections.

Biography
Alwyn Rapose obtained his Doctorate in Dermatology/Venereology/Leprology from King Edward VII Memorial Hospital, Bombay, India. Thereafter he obtained an MD in Internal Medicine from St. Vincent Hospital, Massachusetts, USA, followed by a Fellowship in Infectious Diseases at the University of Texas Medical Branch, Galveston, Texas, USA. He was a recipient of the NIH/NIAID supported UTMB postdoctoral research grant in Emerging and Reemerging Infectious Diseases. In July 2014 he was elected fellow of the American College of Physicians. He is presently Assistant Professor of Clinical Medicine at the University of Massachusetts, USA and practices as consultant in Infectious Diseases and Travel Medicine at the Reliant Medical Group and St. Vincent Hospital in Massachusetts, USA. Dr. Rapose is board certified in both Infectious Diseases and Internal Medicine.

Alwyn.Rapose@reliantmedicalgroup.org