In dogs, superficial bacterial folliculitis, sometimes called superficial pyoderma, is a common condition that is often treated with antimicrobials.

Using topical therapy (e.g., biocide shampoos) and other non-antimicrobial alternatives is part of good antimicrobial stewardship, and helps achieve the best outcome for patients. Topical therapy alone can be just as effective as systemic antimicrobials and can even control resistant infections.

When antimicrobials are needed, careful drug selection is critical. It is always best practice to perform a culture to confirm the therapy is appropriate or needs adjusting, especially in dogs already recently treated with antimicrobials.

There are 5 scenarios when culture is especially critical:

- New lesions 2 or more weeks after starting antimicrobial therapy
- Lesions still present after 6 weeks of antimicrobial therapy plus cocci on cytology
- Intracellular rod-shaped bacteria on cytology
- Prior history of a multidrug-resistant infection in the dog or another pet in the home
- Less than 50% decrease in lesions after 2 weeks of antimicrobial therapy

For more information, go to:

Guidelines for the diagnosis and antimicrobial therapy of canine superficial bacterial folliculitis, from ISCAID (Hillier et al. Vet Dermatol 2014)