Cellulitis

(Updated 11-05-2018)

Signs and Symptoms:

1. Painful, erythematous, swollen, tender area.
2. Fever may or may not be present.
3. Typically, erythema spreads without treatment.
4. Patients presenting with rapidly spreading and very painful infections (suggestive of necrotizing fasciitis a life-threatening infection of the deeper tissues) should be considered for urgent evacuation.

Contraindications:

Allergy to an indicated medication.

Management:

1. Clean and dress wound and surrounding area.
2. Use a pen to mark the demarcation border of the infection and re-evaluate in 24 hours.
3. Initiate antibiotic therapy as per Figure 1 – Cellulitis Antibiotic Therapy Flowchart.
4. Treat pain per SOMT Pain Protocol as required.
5. If possible, limit activity until infection resolves.

Figure 1 – Cellulitis Antibiotic Therapy Flowchart

Disposition:

1. Re-evaluate daily and watch for progression of erythema while on antibiotics.
2. Cellulitis in critical areas (head, neck, hand, joint involvement, perineal) requires Priority evacuation.
3. Complicated infections (use of IV antibiotics) require Priority evacuation.
Notes:

1. Sometimes, people with MRSA skin infections first think they have a spider bite. However, unless a spider is actually seen, the irritation is likely not a spider bite. Most staph skin infections, including MRSA, appear as a bump or infected area on the skin that might be:
   - Red
   - Swollen
   - Painful
   - Warm to the touch
   - Full of pus or other drainage
   - Accompanied by fever (From: https://www.cdc.gov/mrsa/community/index.html)

2. Ertapenem – Reconstitution, Administration and Storage

**IV Administration**
- Preferred route
- Reconstitute with 10ml of 0.9% NaCl or bacteriostatic water.
- Infuse over 30 minutes
- May be administered IV up to 14 days

**IM Administration**
- Reconstitute with 3.2ml of 1% lidocaine HCL
- Select a large muscle for injection.
- May be administered IM up to 7 days.

**Storage**
- The reconstituted solution, immediately diluted in 0.9% Sodium Chloride Injection, may be:
  - stored at room temperature (25°C) and used within 6 hours; or
  - stored for 24 hours under refrigeration (5°C) and used within 4 hours after removal from refrigeration.
- Reconstituted solutions of ertapenem that become frozen should not be used.

(From: RxTx CPhA Ertapenem Monograph)