

# Left Foot Infection, 9-24-10

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## 1. Describe diagnosis or procedure/surgery

Cellulitis is noncontagious and acute inflammation of the connective tissue of the skin, resulting from a bacterial infection, caused by infection with staphylococcus, streptococcus or other bacteria. Antibiotics are given to control infection, and analgesics may be needed to control pain. Within 7 to 10 days of treatment cellulitis can be cured. Cellulitis is a spreading infection of the skin that usually begins as a small area of tenderness, swelling, and redness on the skin. As this red area begins to spread, the person may develop a fever, sometimes with chills and sweats, and swollen lymph nodes ("swollen glands") near the area of infected skin. Some cases of cellulitis appear on areas of trauma, where the skin has broken open, such as the skin near ulcers or surgical wounds. Many times, however, cellulitis occurs where there has been no break in the skin at all.

## 2. Possible causes of the diagnosis or need for procedure/surgery

Risk factors for cellulitis include:

- Cracks or peeling skin between the toes
- History of peripheral vascular disease
- Injury or trauma with a break in the skin (skin wounds)
- Insect bites and stings, animal bites, or human bites
- Ulcers from diabetes or a blockage in the blood supply (ischemia)
- Use of corticosteroid medications or medications that suppress the immune system
- Wound from a recent surgery

## 3. Signs and symptoms that patient may be experiencing

Patient may be experiencing fever, inflammation of the left foot, and also pain depending on level of infection. The patient may experience localized skin redness or inflammation that increase in size as the infection spreads. Tight, glossy, "stretched" appearance of the skin. Pain or tenderness of the area. Skin lesion or rash (macule): Sudden onset, usually with sharp borders, and rapid growth within the first 24 hours. Warmth over the area of redness. Fever. And other signs of infection : chills, shaking, warm skin, sweating, fatigue, muscle aches, pain and general ill feelings. Additional symptoms could include nausea and vomiting. Joint stiffness cause by swelling of the tissue over the joint. And hair loss at the site of infection.



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## **4. Diagnostic test(s) that may be performed to diagnosis patient or identify the need for surgery**

During a physical examination, the doctor may find:

- Redness, warmth, and swelling of the skin
- Swelling and drainage if the infection is around a skin wound
- Swollen glands (lymph nodes) near the cellulitis

Your health care provider may mark the edges of the redness with a pen, to see if the redness goes past the marked border over the next several days.

Tests that may be used:

- A CBC may show an elevated white blood cell count, and indicates a bacterial infection
- A blood culture may be performed if generalized infection is suspected

## **5. Possible medications to use to treat diagnosis**

- Antibiotic would be used to treat the infection
- Pain medicine if there is any pain associated with the infection
- Aspirin to reduce fever if present and inflammation if present
- Antibiotics are given to control infection and analgesics may be needed to control pain.

## **6. Nursing interventions that will assist the patient through the healing process**

- Plan rest periods according to the client's daily schedule
- Consult a physical therapist
- Monitor temperature every 4 h
- Assess wound site every 24 h and during dressing changes
- Evaluate any abnormal laboratory findings
- Assess nutritional status to provide adequate protein and caloric intake for healing
- Wash hands periodically throughout the day
- Encourage client to ask questions about health problem, treatment, progress, and prognosis
- turn patient every 2 hours
- teach client to recognize early signs of tissue damage
- keep client clean and dry
- check reddened area each day at shift change to notice any movement relative to the pen markings
- keep the patient ambulating as much as possible
- keep bony areas of the body at every turn

## **7. List possible nursing diagnoses**

- Activity intolerance
- Impaired bed mobility
- Disturbed body image

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- Impaired Comfort
- Risk for falls
- Risk for Injury
- Chronic Pain
- Impaired physical mobility
- Impaired Skin integrity
- Risk for impaired skin integrity
- Impaired Walking

