Diagnosis of Cellulitis

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- **Early detection of cellulitis is crucial.**
- Educate patients to monitor for redness, warmth, and tenderness around the infusionsite.

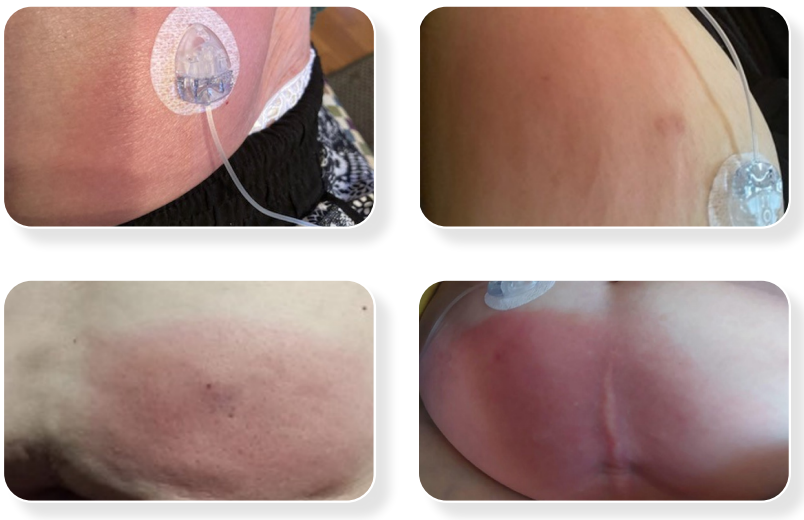
Red flags that warrant immediate medical attention:

- Fever
- Chills
- General malaise
- Fatigue
- Other systemic symptoms

Immediate initiation of antibiotic therapy, as guided by clinical severity, can prevent complications.

Characteristics

- **Cellulitis**: bacterial infection involving the inner layers of the skin, specifically affecting dermis and subcutaneous fat.[1]
- Presents as a **red, swollen, warm, and often painful** area of skin. Area of redness increases in size over a few days with borders that are generally round, but the edges of the redness are not always well defined.[1]
- Individual may have a fever and feel tired.[2]
- Lymphatic vessels may occasionally be involved.[1-4]
- Potential complications include abscess formation.[1]
- Infusion-site swabbing discouraged.[5]
  - Swabbing skin will not identify bacterial pathogen and may produce inconclusive results.



Causes

- **Cellulitis** is typically caused by *Streptococcus* or *Staphylococcus aureus* bacteria.[1]

1. Vary JC, O'Connor KM. Common dermatologic conditions. *Med Clin North Am*. 2014;98(3):445–485; 2. Mistry RD. Skin and soft tissue infections. *Pediatr Clin North Am*. 2013;60(5):1063–1082; 3. Edwards G, Freeman K, Llewelyn MJ, Hayward G. What diagnostic strategies can help differentiate cellulitis from other causes of red legs in primary care? *BMJ*. 2020;368:m54; 4. Tintinalli JE, Ma O, Yealy DM, Meckler GD, Stapczynski J, Cline DM, Thomas SH, eds. Tintinalli's Emergency Medicine: A Comprehensive Study Guide. 9th ed. McGraw-Hill Education; 2020. Accessed November 27, 2024. https://accessmedicine.mhmedical.com/content.aspx?bookid=2353&sectionid=183421313;
5. Fung VSC, and al. Clinical Parkinsonism & Related Disorders. 2024, Vol.10.