



QUESTIONS QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ANSWERS

What is Cellulitis?

Cellulitis is a skin infection caused by germs. The germs enter through a break in the skin, often caused by the following:

- Cut
- Burn
- Bite or scratch from a dog, cat or other animal
- Human bite
- Bug bite
- Surgery
- Skin ulcers

What are the signs of Cellulitis?

Cellulitis most often appears on the face, legs and arms. The site of the infection will be tender. There will be:

- Pain
- Swelling
- Redness
- Fever and chills

Cellulitis on the face can spread to the eyes and cause a serious eye infection. **Call your doctor right away if you have signs of cellulitis on your face.**

What can increase my risk of getting Cellulitis?

- Diabetes
- Anything that breaks the skin
- Poor blood flow
- Skin problems such as eczema or psoriasis

- Athlete's foot

Why is treatment for Cellulitis needed quickly?

- Germs can get into the blood.
- Cellulitis on the face can cause infection in the **eyes and brain**.
- Blood clots can form in the veins.
- Cellulitis can cause skin to die at the infected spot, called gangrene.

How will my doctor test for Cellulitis?

- Take a complete medical history.
- Do a medical exam.
- Order tests, including blood tests for infection, skin cultures and X-rays.

What is the treatment for Cellulitis?

- Take antibiotics to fight the infection. The antibiotics can be taken by mouth or through the veins.
- Prop up the infected leg or arm to reduce swelling.
- Place cool pads on the infected spot.
- Take the pain medicine prescribed by your doctor as needed.
- Wear support stockings to help stop fluid build-up.
- Persons with diabetes and poor blood flow should keep their feet clean, dry and protected by shoes or slippers.
- Treat foot infections, such as athlete's foot.
- Do not touch things that can cause infection, such as raw fish, chicken or meat.
- **Take all of your antibiotics.** Follow up with your doctor after you have finished all of your antibiotics. The doctor will check to see that all of the infection is gone.

How can I find a Doctor?

St. Vincent Charity Hospital has doctors who have special training in the treatment of infections. To contact one of our doctors, please call:

Physician Referral Line at 1.800.223.8662

Visit our website at www.stvincentcharity.com

St. Vincent Charity Hospital

2351 East 22nd Street
Cleveland, Ohio 44115
216.861.6200
TTY: Ohio Relay 1.800.750.0750

**The HealthCare Center at Saint Luke's
Pointe**

11201 Shaker Boulevard
Cleveland, Ohio 44104
216.721.6900

For more information, please call The Wound Center at St. Vincent Charity Hospital at 216.363.2646.

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**ST. VINCENT CHARITY
MEDICAL CENTER**

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