

ED OBSERVATION UNIT: CELLULITIS PROTOCOL

NYC H+H KINGS COUNTY HOSPITAL CENTER

General Observation Guidelines apply for all ED observation patients.

INCLUSION CRITERIA

- Failed outpatient therapy or clinician determined requirement for IV antibiotics

EXCLUSION CRITERIA

- Suspected or confirmed severe sepsis
- Immunosuppression (e.g cirrhosis, neutropenia, asplenia, long term systemic steroids and/or immunosuppressive therapy)
- Suspicion for necrotizing fasciitis, Fournier's gangrene or Ludwig's angina
- Associated with bite/puncture wound, or diabetic ulcer
- Orbital or hand cellulitis
- Decubitus ulcer
- Underlying bony hardware
- Postoperative infection
- Extensive tissue damage, sloughing
- Sign of abscess

INTERVENTIONS

- Antibiotics (IV/Oral)
- Analgesics and Anti-inflammatories
- Limb elevation/immobilization
- Imaging, if indicated
- Care management if indicated
- IV Fluids as needed
- Consider ENT/OMFS consult if clinically warranted for facial/neck cellulitis

DISPOSITION

Last updated 9/7/21

Reviewed by B. Zonnoor, D. Warshaw MD, R. Allen MD, E. Madden MD, R. Balakrishnan MD, S. Brewster MD

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Home:

- Improvement in clinical condition
- Area of cellulitis not increasing
- Able to tolerate po antibiotics

Admission:

- Spread or worsening of infection
- Signs of systemic illness
- No response to therapy or rising WBC

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