

Cellulitis

Cellulitis is a bacterial infection that affects the deeper layers of the skin and the underlying tissue. It is typically caused by bacteria, most commonly *Streptococcus pyogenes* (also known as Group A streptococcus) or *Staphylococcus aureus*. The bacteria enter the skin through a cut, scrape, or other break in the skin, and then multiply, leading to an infection.

Cellulitis usually affects the legs and feet, but it can occur on any part of the body. The affected area often becomes red, swollen, and tender. Other common symptoms include warmth, pain, and sometimes the development of blisters or skin dimpling. Cellulitis can also cause fever, chills, fatigue, and swollen lymph nodes.

It is important to seek medical attention if you suspect you have cellulitis, as the infection can spread rapidly and potentially lead to serious complications. A doctor will typically diagnose cellulitis by examining the affected area and may order additional tests, such as blood cultures or imaging studies, to determine the extent of the infection.

The primary treatment for cellulitis is antibiotics, usually taken orally. The choice of antibiotics depends on the suspected bacteria causing the infection and may be adjusted based on culture results if available. It is important to complete the full course of antibiotics as prescribed, even if the symptoms improve before the medication is finished. Elevating the affected limb and applying warm compresses can also help reduce swelling and discomfort.

In some cases, cellulitis may require hospitalisation, especially if the infection is severe, there are systemic symptoms, or if complications arise. In the hospital, intravenous antibiotics can be administered, and close monitoring can be provided.

To prevent cellulitis, it is essential to practice good hygiene, including keeping the skin clean and moisturised, avoiding scratching or picking at skin wounds, and promptly treating any cuts, scrapes, or insect bites. If you have a weakened immune system or a history of cellulitis, your doctor may recommend additional preventive measures.

It's important to consult your doctor at SunStar Clinics for prompt diagnosis and appropriate treatment if you suspect you have cellulitis or any other medical condition.