

## Ambulatory Emergency Care Unit

# Cellulitis: Discharge information for patients returning for Intravenous Antibiotics

### About your condition

You have been diagnosed as having cellulitis. This is an infection of the skin and soft tissue. The symptoms may be:

- Redness
- A hot feeling on your skin
- Swelling
- Sometimes pain
- Sometimes blisters

Cellulitis is often caused as a result of a break in the skin through which bacteria can spread although in many cases a cause may not be found. You may have flu like symptoms and feel generally unwell.

### About your treatment

Depending on your condition, you will be allowed home from hospital after a minimum of 1 hour from your first dose of intravenous antibiotics. You will then be given an appointment to return to clinic the following day to receive your second dose of antibiotics.

After a total of 3 days of intravenous antibiotics the nursing team will assess whether you can change to tablet antibiotics.

### How often do I require the injections?

Your dose of intravenous antibiotics will be given once a day through a cannula (soft plastic tube inserted in a vein) in your arm or hand.



## Patient Information

### About your cannula

A cannula will be inserted into your vein in your arm or hand in hospital. This allows the nurses access to give your treatment intravenously. A dressing will be applied over the cannula to keep it in place, clean and dry.

Be careful not to knock or catch the cannula as this may be painful and you may also dislodge the cannula from your vein. If you notice any redness, swelling or pain around the cannula site or are worried about it at all contact the Ambulatory Emergency Care Unit on 024 7696 65832 or 024 7696 6218

If you accidentally dislodge or remove your cannula there is likely to be a small amount of bleeding from the site. Apply pressure and elevate the arm for a few minutes until the bleeding stops. If the bleeding continues please seek medical help.

### General advice:

- **Do** take painkillers regularly because they won't work as well if you wait until the pain is too bad.
- **Do** rest with your affected leg raised above the height of your chest if possible.
- **Do** exercise regularly to keep the muscles working properly, if you are able.
- **Do** eat a good well balanced diet.
- **Do** inform the doctor or nurse immediately if you suffer a sudden increase in pain in your calf or foot, also if your toes become discolored or feel numb.
- **Do not** remove your dressings or bandages, please inform the nurse if you feel they are uncomfortable and they can try and adjust them for you. If you remove the dressings or bandages without the nurses being aware, you may put yourself at greater risk of developing a further infection.
- **Do not** scratch your legs as this can damage your skin and cause further infections, or possibly cause an injury to your leg.

### Once the cellulitis is getting better:

- **Do** take good care of your skin, keep it clean and apply a moisturising lotion e.g. aqueous cream / E45 to any dry patches of skin.
- **Do** wear your support stockings (if you have been issued with these).
- **Do** try to lose weight if you are overweight, this will take a lot of strain off your legs and help stop the cellulitis coming back.

### Foot exercises

Even if you are unable to walk around easily without assistance, you can still do foot exercises. These exercises mimic the action of walking and so can improve the flow of blood in your veins. They should be performed several times a day, the more often the better.

- Rotate your foot in one direction then in the other, do this 10 times
- Flex your foot by pulling your toes up towards your knees then point your foot down again, do this 10 times.
- When moving around the house if you are able to take a moment to stand, hold the nearest furniture, and come on to tiptoe then down again, do this 10 times in a row.

## Patient Information

### Useful telephone numbers

Ambulatory Emergency Care Unit, UHCW

Monday – Friday: 8 am – 8 pm

Weekends 10pm – 6pm

Tel: 024 7696 65832 or 024 7696 6218

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format please contact 024 7696 6217 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy.

### Document History

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