1 Cellulitis

Patient name: _____ **Admission:** _____

DATE	NRS INITIAL

I. The client/caregiver will be able to define cellulitis.

A. It is an inflammation of dermis and subcutaneous tissues.
B. It is usually caused by streptococcal or staphylococcal infection.
C. Common locations for cellulites are the face and lower legs, but it can occur anywhere on the body.
D. Bacteria may enter through a break in the skin, or an area of dry, flaky skin.

II. The client/caregiver can list risk factors for cellulitis.

A. Increasing age
B. Impaired immune system
C. Diabetes mellitus
D. Chicken pox or shingles
E. Chronic swelling of arms or legs (lymphedema)
F. Chronic fungal infections of feet and toes

III. The client/caregiver will be able to list signs and symptoms of cellulitis.

A. Redness, warmth
B. Localized pain and tenderness
C. Fever, chills, and malaise
D. Swelling
E. Skin resembling that of an orange (peau d'orange)
F. Lesion or open wounds
G. Drainage

IV. The client/caregiver can list treatments to promote healing.

A. Immobilize and elevate affected limb
B. High-protein diet
C. Antibiotics (local ointments and/or system antibiotics) as ordered

DATE	NRS INITIAL

D. Pain management
   1. Cool wet packs, which may promote comfort
   2. Pain medications as needed
E. Wound care
   1. Wash hands well before and after changing dressing.
   2. Wash wound with soap and water or ordered solution.
   3. Use aseptic technique.
   4. Wash soiled linens separately.
   5. Cover wound with bandage. Change bandages often.
F. Preventive measures
   1. Moisturize skin regularly—prevent cracking and peeling.
   2. Watch for signs of infection—redness, pain, or drainage.
   3. Trim fingernails and toenails carefully. Consult with podiatrist if necessary.
   4. Protect hands and feet with gloves and proper footwear.
   5. Seek prompt treatment for open areas or signs of infection.

V. The client/caregiver will be able to list possible complications of cellulitis.

A. Gangrene
B. Sepsis
C. Metastatic abscess
D. Flesh-eating strep (necrotizing fascitis)

REFERENCES

Canobbio, M. M. (2006). *Mosby's handbook of patient teaching.* St. Louis: Mosby Inc.

Cohen, B. J., & Taylor, J. J. (2005). *Memmler's the human body in health and disease* (10th ed.). Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.

 © 2008 Jones and Bartlett Publishers, Inc. *www.jbpub.com*