

ORAL INFECTIONS

Level II

Skill Level: RN

Definition: An infectious process involving the deep tissues of the oral mucosa and/or the supporting structures of the teeth, e.g., gingiva, bone). Infections may include general cellulitis or may follow a dental procedure or injury.

<p>Subjective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• "My gums are swollen."• "I have an abscess."• "My neck is swollen"• "My cheek is swollen"• "I am swollen under my eye"	<p>Assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alterations in the oral mucosa.• Alteration in comfort.• Potential alteration in nutrition.• Facial or submandibular swelling from dental infection is potentially serious and should be monitored very closely.
<p>Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Intraoral swelling, localized, greater than 2 cm, usually firm, tender to palpation.• Extra-oral swelling may be present, also tender to palpation.• Bleeding may be present.• Localized or generalized pain may be present.• Temperature may be present.	<p>Plan:</p> <p>Call the Dental Clinic and send the patient immediately to the dentist if possible. Check other institutions, if possible, to see if a dentist is available.</p> <p>Provide Level I treatment plan plus at nursing discretion may use any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check for allergies to medications.• If visible swelling start antibiotic: --Amoxicillin 500 mg TID for 10 days. --If allergy to Amoxicillin, contact dentist or medical provider on call for possible Clindamycin order.• Check patient daily for three days. Swelling should be subsiding within 48 hours. If not, or if swelling is getting worse, contact dentist or medical provider on call.• Instruct patient to use meds available on the housing unit to treat pain (handout).• If available meds not effective, may use Ketoprophen 75 mg TID for 5 days instead. (Always second line.)• May order soft diet.• Inform dental department of the condition, and suggest an urgent appointment with the dentist.

Nursing Education:

Facial Cellulitis, and especially cellulitis around the eyes (peri-orbital cellulitis) is potentially a very serious medical condition. When in doubt, contact a medical provider if a dental infection seems to be spreading onto the face, especially if it is near the eyes or if there is a fever over 101 degrees.

APPROVED:

Health Service Manager

MA. M

Dental Director

Steve Swenson

Medical Director

Date

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Date

11/17/08

Date

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