



## STAR APPOINTMENT NEEDED SKIN INFECTION ADVICE

You have a skin infection called **cellulitis**.

All visits to your nurse or doctor for **cellulitis** are **FREE** of charge (\* see Note).

Your nurse or doctor needs to see you again in **2 days** to check that the infection is getting better. Please contact your GP Medical Centre to book this appointment, tell them you are on the **STAR** Pathway.

**IMPORTANT**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Treatment:

#### 1. Medication

Your doctor has put you on **antibiotics** to help fight the infection.

Do not stop taking the antibiotic, it is important to **take ALL of the tablets**.

Your infection may come back if you stop taking this medicine.

#### 2. Rest and elevate

Please rest and elevate (**raise up**) the arm or leg with the infection above your heart.

WHY: It reduces swelling

- It reduces pain
- It improves the circulation of the antibiotic
- It may prevent a stay in hospital

WHEN: Try to rest for most of the day

You can get up for a short time every hour - to go to the toilet or get some food/drink. Do not do heavy housework/DIY/gardening.

Ask your doctor for a medical certificate if you need one.



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### 3. General

- Drink lots of water
- If you have an open wound, keep it clean and covered with a dressing
- It is normal for the red area to spread up your arm or leg for the first 1-2 days, this does not mean the medication is not working.
- After the medication is finished, your arm or leg will still look red, and it may take 1-2 weeks to look normal again. If you're worried, contact your GP.

#### See a doctor sooner than 2 days if:

- 1) You have an **allergic reaction** to the tablets, which could be a rash or diarrhoea (runny poos). If you have trouble breathing, swelling around your mouth or you collapse, call an ambulance.
- 2) You feel **more unwell**, which could be a fever (hot or cold, shivers) or feeling dizzy/faint. Drinking water and taking paracetamol might help, but call your doctor if you're worried.
- 3) The **pain, redness or swelling** in your arm or leg is **getting worse**. The redness often spreads for 1-2 days before it starts to get better, but call your doctor if you're worried (taking a photo of the red area is a good idea).

**Call your GP or go to Whakatane Emergency Department (ED) if it is after-hours.**

**On Saturday and Sunday there is a GP in ED between 10 and 4 o'clock.**

**If you live closer to Opotiki, there is an after-hours service at the Community Health Centre, 32A King Street – please call 07 315 8500.**

#### Help offered

We have asked a healthcare worker to call you (if you say it's ok) and offer any help you might need with:

- 1) If you don't have a GP in the EBOP. They can help you to enrol with one.
- 2) If you are finding it difficult to see your GP in 2 days. They can help you make the appointment and get to the doctors (transport).

**\*NOTE** - If you are enrolled with Ohope Beach MC or The Doctors Phoenix there may be a co-payment to pay.



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