

Does the patient have bilateral Red Legs?

Yes

Consider differential diagnosis of redness:

- Varicose eczema
- Gravitational dermatitis
- Contact dermatitis
- Fungal infection
- Lymphoedema/chronic oedema
- Heat induced redness e.g. sunburn

Referral to Dermatology/Vascular or Lymphoedema may be necessary.

Some drugs cause red legs/oedema e.g.
Pregabalin/gabapentin
Corticosteroids,
some Parkinson's medication
Calcium channel blockers e.g. amlodipine can exacerbate lower limb oedema

BILATERAL CELLULITIS IS RARE – however if a patient is pyrexial with no other symptoms of infection blood tests should be taken to check CRP and antibiotic therapy may be necessary

No

Is the patient systemically unwell/pyrexial

Yes

If the patient has unilateral leg redness and is pyrexial with associated skin blistering, heat, oedema, pain and feeling systemically unwell consider a diagnosis of acute cellulitis and treat accordingly. Blood tests may confirm raised CRP/ESR. Differential diagnosis may include necrotising fasciitis.

No

If the patient is systemically well and apyrexial but redness, heat, oedema and pain is noted, if DVT is suspected please refer to DVT pathway

Has the redness improved?

Yes

No

Advise the patient if redness recurs to seek assistance and referral should be made to the Red Leg Clinic. If oedema is present without redness refer to the Lymphoedema Clinic

Refer to the Red Leg Clinic and initiate daily skin hygiene with a soap substitute, daily moisturisation with a bland emollient e.g. Epimax. Encourage exercise as able and compression if safe to use.

If DVT is excluded and redness persists with/without oedema refer to the Red Leg Clinic and treat with daily skin hygiene and moisturisation with a bland emollient e.g. Epimax, exercise (chair based if necessary) and compression where appropriate. If oedema persists but the redness has resolved refer to the Lymphoedema Clinic.

Contact details:

Referral form for Red Leg Clinic or Lymphoedema Clinic: Home \ Clinicians \ Clinical services \ Cancer services \ Support services
01782 676688