Management of
ACUTE OROFACIAL
INFECTION OF ODONTOGENIC
ORIGIN IN CHILDREN

1st Edition
STATEMENT OF INTENT
These clinical practice guidelines (CPG) are meant to be a guide for clinical practice, and are based on the best available evidence at the time of development. Adherence to these guidelines may not necessarily lead to the best clinical outcome in an individual patient care. Every healthcare provider is responsible for the management of their individual patient based on the clinical presentation and management options that are available locally.

REVIEW OF THE GUIDELINES
These guidelines were issued in December 2016 and will be reviewed in December 2021 or earlier if new evidence becomes available.

Published by:
Oral Health Technology Section
Oral Health Division
Ministry of Health Malaysia
Level 5, Block E10, Precinct 1
Federal Government Administrative Centre
62590 Putrajaya, Malaysia

Copyright
The copyright owner of this publication is Oral Health Division, Ministry of Health Malaysia (OHD). The content may be reproduced in any number of copies and in any format or medium provided that a copyright acknowledgement to OHD is included and the content is not changed, not sold, nor used to promote or endorse any product or service or even inappropriately used and quoted out of context in such a way that it distorts its original and intended meaning.

ISBN: 978-967-0769-81-3
This information is available on the following websites:
http://www.moh.gov.my
http://www.ohd.gov.my
http://www.acadmed.org.my
Android and iOS platform: MyMaHTAS
# TABLE OF CONTENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Levels of Evidence and Grades of Recommendation</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidelines Development and Objectives</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Questions, Target Population, Target Group/User Healthcare Settings</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of the Guidelines Development Group</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of the Review Committee</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algorithm</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epidemiology</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Presentation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagnosis</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criteria for Hospitalisation and Referral</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indications for Referral to Other Medical Specialties</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of Acute Orofacial Infection of Odontogenic Origin in Children</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1. Surgical intervention</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2. Management of pain</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.3. Types of antibiotics</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring Progress of Treatment and Discharging Patient</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementing the Guidelines</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 1: Search Strategy</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 2: Clinical Questions</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disclosure Statement</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source of Funding</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Levels of Evidence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Study Design</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Evidence obtained from at least one properly designed randomised controlled trial.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II-1</td>
<td>Evidence obtained from well-designed controlled trials without randomisation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II-2</td>
<td>Evidence obtained from well-designed cohort or case-control analytic studies, preferably from more than one centre or research group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II-3</td>
<td>Evidence obtained from multiple time series studies, with or without intervention. Dramatic results in uncontrolled experiments (such as the results of the introduction of penicillin treatment in the 1940s) could also be regarded as this type of evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>Opinions or respected authorities, based on clinical experience; descriptive studies and case reports; or reports of expert committees.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


# Grades of Recommendation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Study Design</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>At least one meta-analysis, systematic review or RCT or evidence rated as good or directly applicable to the target population.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Evidence from well conducted clinical trials, directly applicable to the target population and demonstrating overall consistency of results; or evidence extrapolated from meta-analysis, systematic reviews or RCT.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Evidence from expert committee reports, or opinions and/or clinical experiences of respected authorities; indicates absence of directly applicable clinical studies of good quality.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Note: The grades of recommendation relates to the strength of the evidence on which the recommendation is based. It does not reflect the clinical importance of the recommendation.
GUIDELINES DEVELOPMENT AND OBJECTIVES

GUIDELINES DEVELOPMENT

The Development Group for these Clinical Practice Guidelines (CPG) consisted of Paediatric Dental Specialists, a Clinical Microbiologist, Dental Public Health Specialists, a general dental practitioner and a dental nurse. A Review Committee was actively involved in the development process of these guidelines.

Literature search was carried out using the following electronic databases: PUBMED/MEDLINE; Cochrane Database of Systemic Reviews (CDSR); ISI Web of Knowledge; Health Technology Assessment (HTA) and full text journal articles via Ovid search engine. The reference lists of all relevant articles retrieved were also examined to identify pertinent information that may be significant for further studies. Free text terms or MeSH terms were used either singly or in combination to retrieve the articles (Appendix 1). Only literature written in English was retrieved.

There were 7 clinical questions assigned to members of the development group. The group members met for a total of eight times throughout the development of the guidelines. Relevant literatures retrieved were appraised by at least two members and presented in the form of evidence table and discussed during the group meetings. All statements and recommendations formulated were agreed upon by both the development group and review committee. These CPG are based on scientific evidences and adapted according to local practices. However, where there was a lack of evidence, recommendations were based on consensus of group members. Ideally patients’ views and preferences were also needed to be considered in the development of CPGs, however in this particular instance, it was not feasible. Nevertheless, patient information leaflets is also considered in the attempt would be developed to facilitate the dissemination of important information to the public in the future.
The levels of evidence of the literature were graded using a modified version adapted from the United States (U.S) / Canadian Preventive Services Task Force, while the grading of recommendations was based on the a modified version of the Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN).

The draft guidelines were reviewed by a team of external reviewers and were also posted on the Ministry of Health, Malaysia and Academy of Medicine, Malaysia websites for comments and feedbacks. These guidelines were presented to the Technical Advisory Committee for CPGs, and finally to the HTA and CPG Council, Ministry of Health, Malaysia for approval.

**OBJECTIVE**

The main aim of the guidelines is to enable practitioners to make informed decisions for individual patients in the detection and management of acute orofacial infection of odontogenic origin in children.

**SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

1. To disseminate and reinforce knowledge on acute orofacial infection of odontogenic origin in children among healthcare professionals.

2. To provide timely and appropriate management procedure of acute orofacial infection of odontogenic origin (AOI) in children by for healthcare professionals.
CLINICAL QUESTIONS
The clinical questions addressed by these guidelines are found in Appendix 2.

TARGET POPULATION
These guidelines will be useful when assessing all children below the age of 16 years who present with signs and symptoms of acute orofacial infection of odontogenic origin.

TARGET GROUP/USER
These guidelines are applicable for all healthcare professionals who are involved in the management of AOI in children which includes: dental officers, medical officers, general practitioners (dental and medical), dental and medical students, paediatric dental specialists, and relevant medical specialists (such as ophthalmology, otorhinolaryngology and paediatrics).

HEALTHCARE SETTINGS
Primary and Specialist Health care settings at public and private sectors.
# Members of the Guidelines Development Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chairperson</th>
<th>Secretary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DR LEONG KEI JOE</strong>&lt;br&gt;Pediatric Dental Specialist&lt;br&gt;Jabatan Pergigian Pediatrik&lt;br&gt;Hospital Queen Elizabeth&lt;br&gt;88586 Kota Kinabalu&lt;br&gt;Sabah</td>
<td><strong>DR YUSHAINI BT AHMAD</strong>&lt;br&gt;Pediatric Dental Specialist&lt;br&gt;Jabatan Pergigian Pediatrik&lt;br&gt;Hospital Sultanah Nur Zahirah&lt;br&gt;20400 Kuala Terengganu&lt;br&gt;Terengganu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **DATIN PADUKA DATO' DR NOORAL ZEILA BT JUNID**<br>Dental Public Health Specialist<br>Bahagian Perancangan<br>Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia<br>Aras 3, Blok E6, Parcel E<br>Pusat Pentadbiran Kerajaan Persekutuan<br>62590 W.P. Putrajaya | **DR ZAINAB BT SHAMDOLE**<br>Dental Public Health Specialist<br>Bahagian Kesehatan Pergigian<br>Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia<br>Aras 5, Block E 10, Kompleks E<br>Pusat Pentadbiran Kerajaan Persekutuan<br>62590 W.P.Putrajaya |

| **DR SHANTHINI DEVI SUBRAMANIAM**<br>Pediatric Dental Specialist<br>Jabatan Pergigian Pediatrik<br>Hospital Raja Permaisuri Bainun<br>30990 Ipoh<br>Perak | **DR SARIMAH BT MOHD MOKHTAR**<br>Pediatric Dental Specialist<br>Jabatan Pergigian Pediatrik<br>Hospital Tuanku Ja’afar<br>70300 Seremban<br>Negeri Sembilan |

| **DR JUANNA BT BAHADUN**<br>Pediatric Dental Specialist<br>Jabatan Pergigian Pediatrik<br>Hospital Shah Alam<br>40000 Shah Alam<br>Selangor | **DR SALLEH BIN ZAKARIA**<br>Dental Public Health Specialist<br>Bahagian Kesehatan Pergigian<br>Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia<br>Aras 5, Block E 10, Kompleks E<br>Pusat Pentadbiran Kerajaan Persekutuan<br>62590 W.P.Putrajaya |

| **DR MIMI SYAZLEEN BT ABD RAHMAN**<br>Pediatric Dental Specialist<br>Jabatan Pergigian Pediatrik<br>Hospital Sungai Buloh<br>47000 Sungai Buloh<br>Selangor | **DR S SOOVULAMAH @ BAVANI**<br>A/P SINNUMUNAIDU<br>Pediatric Dental Specialist<br>Jabatan Pergigian Pediatrik<br>Hospital Kajang<br>43000 Kajang<br>Selangor |

| **DR NIAZLIN BT MOHD TAIB**<br>Lecturer and Clinical Microbiologist<br>Jabatan Mikrobiologi dan Parasitologi Perubatan<br>Fakulti Perubatan dan Sains Kesihatan<br>Universiti Putra Malaysia<br>43400 UPM Serdang<br>Selangor | **DR NAZATUL SABARIAH BT AHMAD**<br>Lecturer and Pediatric Dental Specialist<br>Fakulti Pergigian<br>Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia<br>Tingkat 15, Menara B, Persiaran MPAJ<br>Jalan Pandan Utama<br>55100 Kuala Lumpur |

| **DR SUHAILA BT MAT SAID**<br>Dental Officer<br>Bahagian Kesihatan Pergigian Selangor<br>Jabatan Kesihatan Negeri Selangor<br>Tingkat 11, Wisma Sunway<br>Jalan Persiaran Kayangan, Seksyen 9<br>40100 Shah Alam<br>Selangor | **TSK GUNASUNDARI DEVI A/P KUMARA RAO**<br>Dental Nurse<br>Jabatan Pergigian Pediatrik<br>Hospital Sungai Buloh<br>47000 Sungai Buloh<br>Selangor |
MEMBERS OF THE REVIEW COMMITTEE

A panel of independent reviewers, both locally and internationally, reviewed these guidelines. They were asked to comment primarily on the comprehensiveness and accuracy of the interpretation of the evidence that supports the recommendations put forth in the guideline. The following internal and external reviewers provided comments and feedbacks on the proposed draft:

**Internal Reviewers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Institution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DR THEVADASS A/L PALANY</td>
<td>Consultant Paediatric Dental Surgeon</td>
<td>Jabatan Pergigian Pediatrik</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hospital Sultanah Aminah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>80100 Johor Bahru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Johor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DR RUSNAH BT HUSSAIN</td>
<td>Consultant Ophthalmologist</td>
<td>Jabatan Oftalmologi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hospital Ampang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>68000 Ampang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Selangor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DR JULINA @ AZIMAH BT MD NOOR</td>
<td>Senior Lecturer in Emergency Medicine</td>
<td>Fakulti Perubatan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>40450 Shah Alam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Selangor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DR NAJMUDDIN MOHAMMAD</td>
<td>Dental Officer</td>
<td>Klinik Pergigian Jerangau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dungun 28120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Terengganu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DR WONG KE JUIN</td>
<td>Paediatrician</td>
<td>Jabatan Pediatrik</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hospital Wanita dan Kanak – Kanak Likas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Karung Berkunci 187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>88996 Kota Kinabalu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sabah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DR MUHAMMAD NOORHISYAM</td>
<td>Consultant ORL Surgeon</td>
<td>Hospital Serdang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>43000 Serdang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Selangor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DR LEE CHEE WEI</td>
<td>Oral Maxillofacial Surgeon</td>
<td>Klinik Pakar Pergigian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hospital Keningau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>89007 Keningau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sabah</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**External Reviewers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Institution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DATUK DR KHAIRIYAH BT ABD. MUTTALIB</td>
<td>Dean</td>
<td>Faculty of Dentistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SEGi University &amp; Colleges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>47810 Kota Damansara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Selangor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DR GHALIB W. QADRI</td>
<td>Consultant in Paediatric Dentistry</td>
<td>Preventive &amp; Paediatric Dentistry Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Al- Hada Military Hospital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P.O. Box. 1347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Taif 21944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kingdom of Saudi Arabia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DR PAUL ASHLEY</td>
<td>Consultant Paediatric Dentistry</td>
<td>UCL Eastman Dental Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>256 Gray’s Inn Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DR CHOW KAI FOO</td>
<td>Oral Maxillofacial Surgeon</td>
<td>President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Malaysian Dental Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>54-2, 2nd Floor, Medan Setia 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Plaza Damansara, Bukit Damansara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>50490 Kuala Lumpur</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ALGORITHM

MANAGEMENT OF ACUTE OROFACIAL INFECTION OF ODONTOGENIC ORIGIN IN CHILDREN

Children with suspected Acute Orofacial Infection (AOI)

- History taking and clinical examination
- Identify source of infection
- Further investigation - Radiography/Vitality test

Acute Orofacial Infection (AOI)

*Indicated for hospitalization

- Consult / Refer Paediatric Dental Specialist
- Admission
- IV Antibiotics / Fluids
- Removal of source of infection
- Multidisciplinary management (if required)

Resolved
No treatment Required

Discharge with follow-up

*Indication for hospitalization

1. Compromised airway (stridor/abnormal breath sounds)
2. Raised floor of mouth
3. Systemically unwell (ill appearance, fever, malaise, lethargic, dehydration)
4. Limitation of mouth opening
5. Poor compliance to oral therapy
6. Reduced oral intake
7. Fail outpatient therapy (oral medication)
8. Rapidly progressive lesion/multi space spread
9. Difficult access to medical care

Condition 1 & 2 shall warrant urgent referral to hospitals capable for emergency intubation & ICU backup

Consider other diagnosis

Treat as outpatient with oral medication

Able to remove source of infection (Extraction/RCT)

NO

Discharge with follow-up

YES

Consult / Refer Paediatric Dental Specialist

- Further investigation
- Removal of source of infection
- Comprehensive dental treatment under general anaesthesia
- Multidisciplinary management (if required)

Discharge with follow-up
1. INTRODUCTION

Odontogenic infections are among the most common infections of oral cavity. The causes of odontogenic infections are dental pulp necrosis secondary to dental caries, deep dental restorations or dental trauma. They progress through 3 stages: inoculation, cellulitis and abscess. Odontogenic infections are usually localised, however, in acute orofacial infection stage, the infection can spread rapidly ranging from mild buccal space infection to a severe life-threatening multi-space infection.

Early diagnosis and treatment are critical as paediatric patients with facial infection become dehydrated and systemically ill very rapidly. The management of these conditions in children poses greater challenges to the clinician as there maybe problems with behaviour management making examination, investigations and treatment difficult. Children may also deteriorate faster due to the differences in physiology and anatomy as compared to adults. Hence, a delay in treatment, especially due to ignorance by carers, or even poor access to hospital care and / or lack of sound diagnostic skills by clinicians will further complicate its management. Furthermore, uncertainty in the management of any of such conditions by the clinicians at the primary care level, will additionally pose serious risk of morbidity and mortality among these paediatric patients. At present, there is no local clinical practice guidelines available on this topic and anecdotal observations conducted have shown that health care providers sometimes face difficulty in making appropriate clinical judgements and there are variations of clinical practice.

2. EPIDEMIOLOGY

AOI is a common encounter in all dental clinics in Malaysia and affects both dentate children and adults. There is variation in the prevalence of odontogenic related infection that have been reported in the literature. For instance, a local study in Raja Perempuan Zainab II Hospital, Kota Bharu, has documented a total of 41 cases over a period of 2 years with a prevalence of 2%. while Kaosiung Chang Gung Children Hospital, Taiwan, reported 56 cases in a year. In contrast, a report from an urban hospital in America reported 63 cases over 6 years.
3. CLINICAL PRESENTATION

A child with AOI commonly presents with an acute inflammatory process called cellulitis and this represents the initial acute phase of the infection. The features of cellulitis are red, warm, tender area of skin often with diffuse swelling. In its early stage, cellulitis feels soft and doughy to palpation whereas in its advanced and serious form, it is firm, indurated and painful because of tissue distension. The patient might also present with a history of toothache and fever preceding the swelling. Upon oral examination there may exist swelling of the buccal sulcus. If the infection is found to be that of odontogenic origin there is usually evidence of tooth or teeth with extensive caries, mobility, fracture, or tenderness to percussion.

When the infection is mild (Figure 1), the child’s body temperature may be below 38°C without significant trismus, swelling or pain. Patients with moderate to severe infections will feel ill and lethargic (malaise). They generally present with an increased heart and respiratory rate, and a temperature greater than 38°C. They often complain of the inability to eat and/or drink. The patient will also present with a large swelling, marked trismus, and moderate to severe pain and may find it difficult to speak and swallow (Figure 2). Oedema of the floor of the mouth and decreased tongue mobility may also be seen clinically. Involvement of multiple adjacent anatomic spaces might be observed. There may be signs of local spread to regional lymph nodes and progression to abscess formation. When abscess formation begins, the swelling will be more localized, fluctuant and tender on palpation, along with red periphery and pus formation.
AOI can spread from the mandible into sublingual, submandibular, buccal, peritonsillar or parapharyngeal spaces whereas infection from the maxilla may spread into periorbital and infratemporal spaces. Severe conditions such as Ludwig’s Angina and secondary respiratory embarrassment, local periorbital cellulitis, cavernous sinus thrombosis, systemic meningitis and sepsis can also occur.\(^3\)\(^,\) level III

**Key messages 1:**

- In its early stage, cellulitis feels soft and doughy to palpation.
- In its advanced and serious form, it is firm, indurated and painful.
- It then progresses to abscess formation where the swelling will be more localized, fluctuant and tender on palpation, along with red periphery and pus formation.
- Prompt diagnosis and management is critical for paediatric patients.

**Recommendation 1:**

Clinicians should be able to recognise the early stage of the disease to institute rapid intervention and to prevent complications \((\text{Grade C})\)
4. DIAGNOSIS

History taking and clinical examination are usually sufficient to arrive to a diagnosis and progression of AOI. Simple questions such as a history of toothache before swelling, history of recent dental treatment (to identify possible cause of infection) and onset of swelling (to determine the rapidness of spread of infection) should form part of the overall history taking. Other further investigations that can be considered to facilitate diagnosis and management should include:

1. Radiographs

Standard plain radiographs
- Intra oral periapical radiograph.
- Simple occlusal radiograph.
- Orthopantomograph (Figure 3).

Further imaging tests
- Ultrasonography (to evaluate presence of pus collection). ¹², level III
- CT scan (to evaluate extension of spread, such as neck spaces, periorbital or cases of multi space involvement). ¹³, level III

2. Sensibility tests
- Electric pulp test.
- Thermal (hot and cold) test.

3. Culture and antimicrobial sensitivity testing

  This is important in certain situations such as those in rapidly spreading infections, patients not responding to empirical therapy and in immunocompromised patients. ¹⁴, level III The ideal clinical sample if an acute abscess develops is an aspirate through intact mucosa disinfected by an appropriate antiseptic mouthwash or swab (such as chlorhexidine) or purulent exudates from within infected canals. ¹⁵, level III; ¹⁶, level I This will reduce contamination from the normal oral flora. Swabs of purulent material have demonstrated poor recovery of strict anaerobes and low mean numbers of isolates per sample (range 1.0–1.6). ¹⁶, level I
Figure 3: OPG with periapical radiolucency of a grossly carious tooth (36)

**Recommendation 2:**

- Diagnosis of AOI should be made mainly by clinical assessment. *(Grade C)*
- There are various imaging techniques available, however, plain radiograph should be the standard imaging for assessment of AOI. *(Grade C – Development Group’s consensus)*

---

**5. CRITERIA FOR HOSPITALISATION AND REFERRAL**

Following the history taking, clinical examination and investigations performed, the clinician needs to make a decision as to whether treat as outpatient or inpatient. Mild cases of AOI can be treated at primary health care settings as outpatient with timely follow-up to monitor progress of disease. However, the following conditions would require hospitalisation:

1. Compromised airway (difficulty in breathing, stridor / abnormal breath sounds)*.
2. Raised floor of mouth* (*Figure 4*).
3. Systemically unwell (ill appearance, fever, malaise, lethargic, dehydration). 17, level III
4. Limitation of mouth opening / trismus.
5. Rapidly progressive lesion / multi space spread.
6. Poor compliance to oral therapy.
7. Reduced oral intake.
8. Failure of outpatient therapy (oral medication).
9. Unable to access to medical care in a timely fashion.

Figure 4: Photo of child with raised floor of mouth

Note: These conditions require complex care which are best managed by Paediatric Dental Specialist. Any cases managed by clinicians as in-patient (e.g. due to logistic issues, child is too unwell, unable to refer in a timely manner, social issues), should be in consultation with Paediatric Dental Specialist.

*Conditions 1 and 2 shall warrant urgent referral to hospitals capable for emergency intubation and Intensive Care Unit backup.

Apart from the above mentioned conditions, the following criteria also warrant referral to the Paediatric Dental Specialist:

1. Rapid progression and involvement of multiple spaces and secondary anatomic spaces. 2 level III
2. Immunocompromised patients.
3. No nearby facility for hospital admission.
4. Require further investigation such as CT scan.
5. Unable to perform surgical intervention.
6. Uncooperative patients.
7. Require comprehensive dental treatment under general anaesthesia.
Recommendation 3:
Consultation with / or referral to the Paediatric Dental Specialist is recommended for moderate to severe cases of AOI. (Grade C)

6. INDICATIONS FOR REFERRAL TO OTHER MEDICAL SPECIALTIES

Referral to other medical specialties (Ophthalmology, Otorhinolaryngology, Paediatrics, etc.) is required for:

1. Patients with sign of airway obstruction shall warrant urgent referral to Otorhinolaryngologist.

2. Patients with AOI which has extended to the orbit with signs of eyelid (periorbital) swelling (Figure 5), double vision (diplopia), reduced visual acuity, abnormal light reflexes, protrusion of the eyeball (proptosis), or impairment of eye movement (ophthalmoplegia). 18-23, level III

Figure 5: Photo of child with periorbital swelling
3. Patients who appear to be systemically ill, or having fever, severe malaise or even presents with signs of central nervous system involvement such as drowsiness, lethargy, vomiting, headache, seizure, or cranial nerve deficit. 18-21, 23, level III

4. Patients with deep and rapidly spreading infections (such as multi space infection, deep neck infection). 24-26, level III

5. Patients with severe and systemic signs of sepsis (high fever or hypothermia, tachycardia, hypotension). 26, 27, level III

6. Patients with underlying disease, such as diabetes mellitus, or immune dysfunction. 10, 25-26, level III

**Recommendation 4:**

Interdisciplinary team should be formed to manage advance and complex cases of AOI. (Grade C – Development Group’s consensus)

---

### 7. MANAGEMENT OF AOI

The common practice in the management of AOI is removal of the source of infection (extraction or pulp therapy) and administration of antibiotics with / without incision and drainage.

#### 7.1. Surgical intervention

Different studies vary in their recommendation on timing of surgical intervention (extraction of causative tooth/teeth with/without incision and drainage). There are generally two modes of management of AOI. 3,5,6,28, level III

a) Pharmacological therapy with immediate surgical intervention.
b) Pharmacological therapy with delayed surgical intervention.
The timing of surgical intervention is based on the patients’ medical stability, access to the oral cavity’s surgical site and availability of the operating theatre if general anaesthesia is needed. Nevertheless, in cases of persistent or rapid progression of infections despite optimal medical therapy given, surgical intervention (Figure 6) must be instituted immediately. 6, level III In the scenario where the child is uncooperative and has other carious teeth to be managed, comprehensive dental treatment under general anaesthesia is recommended. Furthermore, the chance for readmission will be reduced. 6, level III The removal of the source of infection either by extraction or pulp therapy (Figure 7) of the offending tooth mainly depends on several other factors that include restorability, cooperativeness of the child, medical problems and orthodontic considerations.

Figure 6: Post Extra-oral Incision and Drainage with rubber drain in-situ

Figure 7: Root Canal Treatment on Tooth 46
Key messages 2:
It is imperative that the source of infection be removed as soon as possible in cases of AOI.

Recommendation 5:
- Antibiotics should be administered immediately. Surgical intervention should not be delayed if possible.
- Comprehensive dental treatment under general anaesthesia is recommended in an uncooperative child with multiple carious teeth. (Grade C)

7.2. Management of pain

There are several medication options to manage pain resulting from facial cellulitis such as Paracetamol, Ibuprofen, Naproxen and Diclofenac Sodium. These medications are adequate to manage mild pains; however for moderate or severe pains require combination with other agents, most commonly the opioid group. Paracetamol is the first-line treatment for most mild to moderate acute pain due to its favourable safety and cost profiles.

7.3. Types of Antibiotics

Judicious use of antibiotic for therapy in odontogenic cellulitis is imperative in preventing antibiotic resistance. The antibiotics used must reach the site of infection at a therapeutic level and adequate duration to produce the desired effect and should be provided as soon as possible. Most common facultative bacteria isolated were viridans streptococci, Neisseria and Eikenella species. Among anaerobes, Prevotella and Micromonas (formerly Peptostreptococcus species) were more frequent.

Penicillin remains the antibiotic of choice for mild to moderate odontogenic infections in the fit and healthy child. However, it is not recommended as initial therapy for more serious infections possibly due to penicillin resistant oral anaerobes.
phenoxymethylpenicillin (penicillin V) is the penicillin of choice for odontogenic infections in comparison to benzylpenicillin (penicillin G). It has higher acid stability and produces plasma levels that are two to five times higher than an equivalent dose of penicillin G. However, penicillin has limited activities against anaerobes. Therefore, a combination of penicillin with metronidazole, which is active against anaerobes, is recommended.

Besides penicillin, ampicillin and amoxicillin remains the alternative line of antibiotic. Amoxicillin is better absorbed orally than penicillin V. In cases of beta lactam antibiotic (penicillin, ampicillin, amoxicillin, cephalosporin) resistance, broad spectrum antibiotics such as amoxicillin / clavulanate (Augmentin) or ampicillin / sulbactam (Unasyn) can be used and generally reserved for more severe orofacial infections.

In individuals who are allergic to the penicillin group, clindamycin remains as an alternative. Clindamycin is active against Streptococci while methicillin is susceptible to Staphylococci. Its spectrum of activity includes nearly all the likely pathogens of odontogenic infections, with the notable exception of Eikenella corroden. It exhibits superior penetration into the jawbone and abscess cavities and it has an advantage over metronidazole that it can be used as monotherapy. It is recommended that clindamycin should probably be reserved for odontogenic infections serious enough to require hospitalisation. The main concern in the past was pseudomembranous colitis due to superinfection with Clostridium difficile. However, it is now known that this condition can occur as an adverse effect of other antibiotics too. The overall incidence of clindamycin-induced Clostridium difficile diarrhoea is probably less than 1%.

First-generation cephalosporin antibiotics (e.g. cephalexin, cephalothin) and second-generation cephalosporin antibiotics (e.g. cefuroxime, cefaclor, cefoxitin) have a significantly broader spectrum of activity than penicillins, and are very active against aerobic and anaerobic gram-positive cocci but are generally unpredictable in their activity against anaerobic gram-negative rods, although for some isolates expanded-spectrum cephalosporins will be effective.
Erythromycin remains a useful and cost effective agent for the treatment of mild odontogenic infections in penicillin-allergic patients. There is, however, an increase in erythromycin resistance among oral anaerobes, especially fusobacteria, viridans group streptococci, Prevotella species and gram-positive anaerobic cocci (GPAC). Azithromycin has been found to be the most active macrolide antibiotic against oral gram-negative anaerobes, and showing activity against oral streptococci comparable to that of erythromycin, and is probably the most suitable agent for this group of orofacial odontogenic infections.

Antibiotics of choice for odontogenic infection are as in Table 1.

Table 1: Recommended antibiotics and dosage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Severity of infection</th>
<th>Recommended antibiotic</th>
<th>Dosage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Mild infection        | Phenoxyemethyl Penicillin | Phenoxyemethyl Penicillin 125mg Tablet  
ADULT: 500-750mg 6 hourly.  
CHILD: up to 1 year: 62.5mg 6 hourly, 1-5 years: 125mg 6 hourly, 6-12 years: 250mg 6 hourly.  
Phenoxyemethyl Penicillin 125mg / 5ml Syrup  
CHILD: Up to 1 year: 62.5mg 6 hourly, 1-5 years: 125mg 6 hourly; 6-12 years 250mg 6 hourly |
| OR                    | Ampicillin            | Ampicillin Trihydrate 125mg / 5ml Suspension  
CHILD: 50-100mg / kg / day 4 times daily.  
Under 1 year: 62.5-125mg 4 times daily.  
1-10 years: 125-250mg 4 times daily.  
Ampicillin Sodium 500mg Injection  
250-500mg IM / IV every 4-6 hours.  
Maximum: 400mg / kg / day.  
CHILD: 150mg / kg / daily IV in divided doses.  
Usual children dose less than 10 years, half adult dose. |
| OR                    | Amoxicillin           | Amoxicillin 250mg Capsule  
ADULT: 250-500mg 3 times daily,  
CHILD: 20-40mg / kg / day in divided doses 8 hourly. |
| OR                    | Cephalosporin (e.g., cephalexin) | Cephalaxin Monohydrate 125mg / 5ml Syrup  
Cephalaxin Monohydrate 250mg / 5ml Syrup  
CHILD: 25-100mg / kg / day every 6 hourly.  
Maximum: 4g daily. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Severity of infection</th>
<th>Recommended antibiotic</th>
<th>Dosage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No improvement within 2-3 days or Moderate – Severe infection</td>
<td>Penicillin / Ampicillin / Amoxicillin and Metronidazole</td>
<td>Dosage for Penicillin/Ampicillin/Amoxicillin as above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dosage for Metronidazole Metronidazole 200mg Tablet ADULT: Initially 800mg followed by 400mg 8 hourly for about 7 days. Other recommended doses: 500mg 8 hourly or 7.5mg / kg 6 hourly (max: 4g in 24 hours). CHILD: 7.5mg / kg 8 hourly. Tab: Should be taken with food. Metronidazole 200mg / 5ml Suspension CHILD: 7.5mg / kg 3 times daily for 7 days. Metronidazole 500mg / 100ml Injection ADULT: 500mg IV infusion 8 hourly. CHILD: 7.5mg / kg body weight every 8 hours. 1 month-18 years: 7.5mg / kg (maximum 500mg) every 8 hours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OR Amoxicillin &amp; Clavulanate</td>
<td>Amoxicillin &amp; Clavulanate 228mg / 5ml Syrup Mild to Moderate infections: 25mg / kg / day (based on Amoxicillin dose) in 2 divided doses. Severe infection: 45mg / kg / day (based on Amoxicillin dose) in 2 divided doses. Amoxicillin 1g &amp; Clavulanate 200mg Injection Amoxicillin 500mg &amp; Clavulanate 100mg Injection ADULT: 1.2g by IV or intermittent infusion 6-8 hourly. CHILD: less than 3 months 30mg / kg 12 hourly, 3 months-12 years 30mg / kg 6-8 hourly. Amoxicillin 500mg &amp; Clavulanate 125mg Tablet ADULT &amp; CHILD more than 12 years: Mild-moderate infections: 625mg twice daily.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OR Ampicillin / Sulbactam</td>
<td>Ampicillin Sodium &amp; Sulbactam Sodium 250mg / 5ml Suspension ADULT: (1-) 2-6g daily. CHILD: (25-) 50-100mg / kg daily. Ampicillin Sodium &amp; Sulbactam Sodium 375mg Tablet ADULT: 375-750mg twice daily. CHILD: 25-50mg / kg / day in 2 divided doses, if &gt; 30kg use an adult dose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severity of infection</td>
<td>Recommended antibiotic</td>
<td>Dosage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|                       | Ampicillin Sodium 1g & Sulbactam Sodium 500mg Injection  
Ampicillin Sodium 500mg & Sulbactam Sodium 250mg Injection  
ADULT: 1.5-12g / day in divided doses 6-8 hourly. Maximum: 4g Sulbactam.  
CHILD: 150-300mg / kg / day 6-8 hourly. |        |
| OR                    | Cefuroxime Axetil 125mg Tablet  
Cefuroxime Axetil 250mg Tablet  
ADULT: 250mg twice daily.  
CHILD: 30mg / kg / day in 2 divided doses, up to 500mg daily.  
Cefuroxime Axetil 125mg / 5ml Suspension  
30mg / kg / day in 2 divided doses up to 500mg daily.  
Cefuroxime Sodium 250mg Injection  
Cefuroxime Sodium 750mg Injection  
Cefuroxime Sodium 1.5 Injection  
ADULT: 750mg every 6-8 hours as IM or IV. Severe infection: 1.5g every 6-8 hours as IV.  
CHILD: 30-100mg / kg / day in 3-4 divided doses. |        |
| Cephalosporin (e.g.  
cefuroxime)          |                        |        |

ALLERGY TO PENICILLIN

| Allergy to penicillin | Clindamycin HCL 300mg Capsule  
ADULT: 150-300mg every 6 hours; up to 450mg every 6 hours in severe infections; Max: 1.8g / day.  
CHILD: 3-6mg / kg every 6 hours. Children weighing <10kg should receive at least 37.5mg every 8 hours.  
Clindamycin Phosphate 150mg / ml Injection  
ADULT: 0.6-2.7g daily (in 2-4 divided doses); up to 4.8g daily.  
CHILD: over 1 month, 20-40mg / kg / day. |        |
|                      | Clindamycin            |        |
| OR                    | Macrolides             |        |
| Macrolides Azithromycin | Azithromycin 200mg / 5ml Granules  
CHILD 36-45kg: 400mg, 26-35kg: 300mg, 15-25kg: 200mg, less than 15kg: 10mg / kg. To be taken daily for 3 days or to be taken as a single dose on day 1, then half the daily dose on days 2-5. |        |
| OR                    | Erythromycin Ethylsuccinate 200mg / 5ml Suspension  
Erythromycin Ethylsuccinate 400mg / 5ml Suspension |        |
<p>| Erythromycin          |                        |        |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Severity of infection</th>
<th>Recommended antibiotic</th>
<th>Dosage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CHILD: 30-50mg / kg daily, increased to twice the usual dose in severe cases. 2-8 years: 1g daily in divided doses. &lt;2 years: 500mg daily in divided doses.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Erythromycin Ethylsuccinate 400mg Tablet ADULT: 400mg 6 hourly or 800mg 12 hourly. Maximum 4g / day. CHILD: 30-50mg / kg / day in divided doses. Children 2-8 years 1g / day in divided doses in severe cases. Infant and children &lt; 2 years 500mg/day in divided doses.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Erythromycin Stearate 250mg Tablet CHILD: 30-50mg / kg daily, increased to twice the usual dose in severe cases. 2-8 years: 1g daily in divided doses. &lt;2 years: 500mg daily in divided doses.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note:
1. Recommended dosages are based on Ministry of Health Medicines Formulary 2016. 42, level III
2. Paediatric dosage should not exceed adult dosages mentioned above. 43, level III

8. MONITORING PROGRESS OF TREATMENT AND DISCHARGING PATIENT

The progress of treatment should be monitored to evaluate the success of the treatment, the need for further surgical intervention, or to determine the need to change the antibiotics. Among the signs of satisfactory progress are as follow:

1. Improved oral intake.
2. Improved systemic (e.g. no episodes of spiking temperature) and general condition.
3. Controlled pain.
4. Reduced soft tissue swelling.
5. Improved mouth opening.
6. Reduced pus discharge / collection.

If the patient is deemed fit for discharge based on the above observations, the patient should be discharged with oral antibiotics to complete the duration of therapeutic regime. Patients should be followed up to ensure complete resolution of infection.
9. CONCLUSIONS

AOI in children should be managed promptly based on adequate clinical examination and radiographic investigation. Moderate to severe cases of AOI may require referral and hospitalisation for further management. Adhering to the proposed algorithm will ensure a systematic management of the patient and timely referral to the specialist for optimal outcome.

10. IMPLEMENTING THE GUIDELINES

It is important to standardise the management of AOI at all healthcare levels in Malaysia by using an evidence-based CPG in order to manage AOI appropriately. An updated knowledge of appropriate management is the key factor in a successful treatment outcome. The successful treatment outcome is influenced by factors such as the ability of clinicians to diagnose AOI in children. Timely and appropriate management with thorough examination are also important factors influencing the successful treatment outcome.

Facilitating and Limiting Factors
Existing facilitators for application of the recommendations in the CPG include:

a) Wide dissemination of the CPG to healthcare professionals via printed and electronic copies.
b) Continuing professional education on the management of AOI for healthcare professionals.
c) Widespread of facilities at primary care level for screening and detection of AOI.

Existing barriers for application of the recommendations of the CPG include:

a) Poor understanding or limited knowledge of AOI.
b) Insufficient resources in the management of AOI particular at specialist care.
c) Variation in treatment practice and preferences.
Potential Resource Implications
To implement the CPG, there must be strong commitment to:

a) Ensure widespread distribution of the CPG to healthcare professionals.
b) Reinforce training of healthcare professionals to ensure updated information, especially in terms of screening at primary care level and multidisciplinary team at secondary care level.
c) Ensure budget allocation as the cost implication on the management of AOI in children varies depending on several factors, such as severity of the condition, patient’s age, the need for hospitalisation and treatment under general anaesthesia. Early detection of the disease and appropriate management will reduce the cost.

Proposed Clinical Audit Indicators
To assist in the implementation of the CPG, the following are proposed as clinical audit indicators for quality management:

\[
\text{Successful management of AOI} = \frac{\text{No. of AOI cases}}{\text{No. of AOI cases}} \times 100
\]

Successful management of AOI = Complete resolution of infection.

Standard = 100%. Any shortfalls in this must be investigated to identify causative factors, such as inadequacy in management or other comorbid conditions such complex medically compromised patients.
REFERENCES


REFERENCES


REFERENCES


Appendix 1

SEARCH STRATEGY

The following MeSH terms or free text terms were used either singly or in combination, search was limit to English, and human:

**Introduction and Epidemiology**
- Acute disease
- Infection
- Mouth
- Orofacial
- Prevalence
- Epidemiology
- Aetiology
- Dental caries
- Paediatrics

**Clinical presentations**
- Signs and symptoms
- Cellulitis
- Fever
- Pain
- Trismus
- Oedema
- Abscess
- Ludwig’s Angina

**Diagnosis**
- Diagnosis
- Oral examination
- Medical History Taking
- Orthopantomography
- Radiography
- Panoramic
- CT scan
- Dental pulp test
- Culture test

**Management**
- Pain management
- Anti-Bacterial Agents
- Tooth extraction
- General anaesthesia
- Surgery oral
Appendix 2

CLINICAL QUESTIONS

The clinical questions addressed by these guidelines are as follows:

1. What are the epidemiological characteristics of AOI?
2. What are the clinical presentations of AOI?
3. How to diagnose a child with AOI?
4. What are the indications for hospitalisation and for referral to Paediatric Dental Specialist?
5. What are indications for referral to other medical specialties?

6. Management of AOI:
   a) When should surgical intervention for AOI be carried out?
   b) What are the effective / safe analgesics to be used in AOI?
   c) What are the effective / safe antibiotics to be used in AOI?

7. What are the criteria on how to assess AOI that is under controlled and for discharging patient?
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The members of the development group of these guidelines would like to express their gratitude and appreciation to the following for their contributions:

- Panel of external reviewers.
- Technical Advisory Committee for CPG for their valuable input and feedback.
- All those who have contributed directly or indirectly to the development of the CPG.
- Patients who have consented for the archiving of their clinical photos.

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

The panel members had completed disclosure forms. None held shares in pharmaceutical firms or acts as consultants to such firms. (Details are available upon request from the CPG Secretariat).

SOURCE OF FUNDING

The development of the CPG on “MANAGEMENT OF ACUTE OROFACIAL INFECTION OF ODONTOGENIC ORIGIN IN CHILDREN” was supported financially in its entirety by the Ministry of Health Malaysia and was developed without any involvement of the pharmaceutical industry.