

Osteomyelitis

What is osteomyelitis?

Osteomyelitis is an infection in the bone, often affected the lower limbs. It is caused by bacteria from a skin infection, a scratch or cold.

Symptoms of osteomyelitis

Symptoms may include:

- Pain
- Swelling and redness in the affected area
- Fever
- Limp, reduced movement or refusal to use the affected limb

Treatment of osteomyelitis

The treatment process differs for each patient depending on the severity and location of the infection. Most children will need to be admitted to hospital for a course of intravenous antibiotics. A splint/brace may be required to rest and reduce the movement of the affected limb. Regular pain relief will be administered if required for comfort. Blood tests and a bone scan may be required during your child's stay in hospital.

If hospitalised

Admission

The admission process is an opportunity to discuss your child's hospital stay and any special needs they may have while in hospital or for going home.

Visiting hours

The Cabrini Paediatric Ward does not have set visiting hours.

Discharge

Your child will be discharged when your doctor is happy with their progress and condition and you are confident with caring for them at home.

Please report to the reception desk in the foyer of the hospital before leaving to finalise any administrative paperwork.

Care at home

- Some children require a longer course of intravenous antibiotics and may be discharged home with continuing intravenous management. Your doctor will discuss with you if this treatment is necessary and you will be referred to an appropriate home care service.
- Once intravenous antibiotics are finished, your child may need to take oral antibiotics. Your child needs to take the entire course of antibiotics, even if they are feeling well and are not showing any symptoms of osteomyelitis.
- Your child should rest the affected area after discharge from hospital. Gradually increase to gentle activities as directed by your doctor.
- Paracetamol and ibuprofen may be given to relieve any discomfort

Follow-up

Please contact your doctor's rooms to organise a follow-up appointment.

When to contact your doctor

- Increased pain or swelling in the affected area
- Reduced movement in the limb
- Persistent temperature of 38.5°C or higher

Questions

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact the Ward using the phone number below.