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May 14th, 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM

Antibiotic Durations for Skin and Soft Tissue Infections In Pediatric Urgent Care Clinics

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Antibiotic Durations for Skin and Soft Tissue Infections in Pediatric Urgent Care Clinics

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Background

• Skin and soft tissue infections (SSTIs) are the second most common diagnoses leading to antibiotic prescriptions
• Children seen in the ambulatory setting for SSTIs often receive >7 days of antibiotics for treatment
• Current society guidelines recommend treatment for 5–7 days for most SSTI diagnoses

Methods

• Patient encounters from three urgent care clinics (UCCs) were pulled with ICD-10 codes for common SSTIs
• Patients were excluded if they were transferred to the ED or admitted, if <3 months of age, if no antibiotics were prescribed, or if a concurrent diagnosis affected antibiotic duration
• A 22-question survey was sent to UCC providers to evaluate prescribing practices

Results

• Reviewed 2,575 patient encounters from June 2019–June 2020 with 208 (8%) excluded
• Antibiotic durations for SSTIs:
  • 823 (35%) patients received >7 days
  • 1181 (50%) received 5–7 days
  • 35 (1%) received <5 days
  • 328 (14%) received topical therapy only
• A mild improvement in the 5–7-day duration was seen
• ~30% of providers are uncomfortable with a 5–day antibiotic course
• Barriers to shorter treatment included: concerns for acute rheumatic fever, parental pressure, treatment failure, and accustomed duration

Conclusion

• A third of children with SSTIs seen at our UCCs receive long courses of antibiotics
• Quality improvement projects are necessary