



Gangrene



Overview

When body tissue dies, we call it "gangrene." You might be able to see it, like on the skin of a hand or foot. But gangrene may also happen within your body. It can happen to a muscle, organ or another part of your body you can't see.

Causes

What causes gangrene? It happens when part of your body doesn't get the blood supply it needs. It may also happen if you have a bad bacterial infection. You can get gangrene after a traumatic injury, frostbite or surgery. Diabetes or atherosclerosis can also cause it. That's because these diseases affect your blood circulation.

Symptoms

What are the symptoms? Well, there are several types of gangrene, and they cause different issues. With gangrene on your skin, you may see color changes. Often, skin becomes a dark greenish color. It can cause sores, blisters and swelling. Your skin may make a crackly sound when you press it. Gangrene inside your body can cause pain and fever. You may become confused. You may have low blood pressure, and you may go into shock. This is life-threatening.

Treatment

How do we treat it? Treatment depends on where the gangrene is. It also depends on how severe it is. We want to treat it as early as possible. You may benefit from antibiotics, surgery and other methods. Your doctor will create a plan that's right for you.