

Author's Accepted Manuscript

Imaging of Osteomyelitis of the Extremities

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PII: S0037-198X(16)30023-2
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1053/j.ro.2016.05.011>
Reference: YSROE50564

To appear in: *Seminars in Roentgenology*

Cite this article as: Usman Anwer and Corrie M. Yablon, Imaging of Osteomyelitis of the Extremities, *Seminars in Roentgenology*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1053/j.ro.2016.05.011>

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Introduction

Osteomyelitis is defined as inflammation of bone, which is typically infectious in etiology. Bacteria can seed bone directly from an adjacent ulcer, through direct inoculation by penetrating trauma, or by hematogenous spread of infection from another source [1]. Direct spread usually infects bone with multiple organisms. *Staphylococcus aureus* is most commonly isolated from hematogenous infections of bone [2]. The infecting agent triggers an inflammatory response consisting of bony hyperemia, edema, and neutrophilic infiltration. The hyperemia causes bone demineralization, seen as a subtle lucency and loss of the cortical contour on radiographs. The neutrophilic infiltrate destroys bony trabeculae, causing osteolysis and replacing the normal fatty marrow to produce the imaging appearance of acute

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