



QR code for mobile view

Exclusion Criteria

- Immunocompromised (*contact Immunocompromised Infectious Diseases Physician on call*)
- Imaging-only temporal bone changes in the absence of clinical signs of mastoiditis
- Known trauma

Signs & Symptoms of Mastoiditis
(usually accompanied by acute otitis media)

- Auricular protrusion **-and/or-**
- Post auricular fluctuance, tenderness, edema, and/or erythema

Factors that Increase the Likelihood of Mastoiditis

- < 2 years of age
- Recurrent otitis media
- Chronic otitis media
- Lack of pneumococcal vaccination (*partially or not vaccinated*)

Alternative Diagnoses

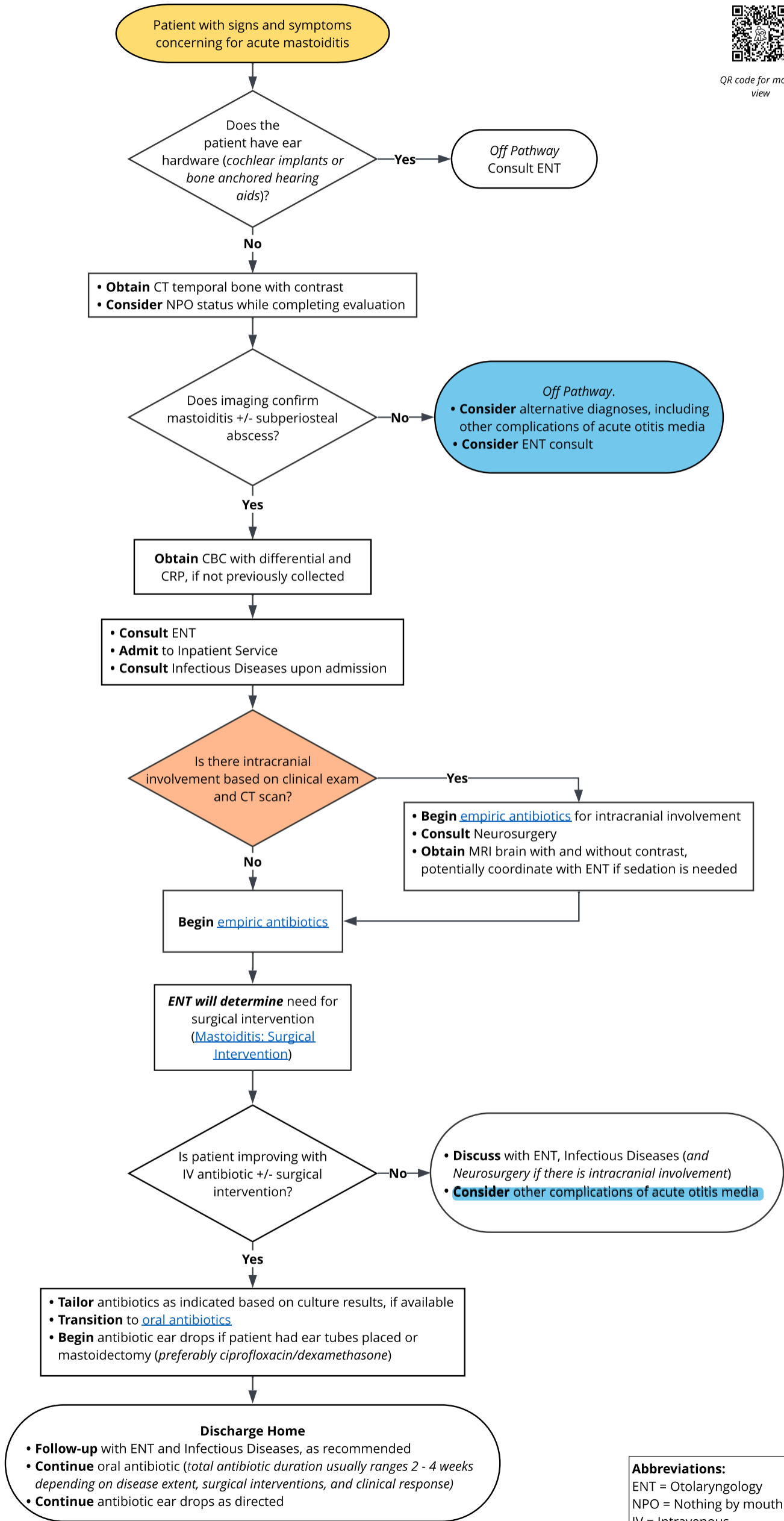
- Otitis externa
- Cellulitis
- Lymphadenopathy or lymphadenitis
- Tumor
- Perichondritis
- Cholesteatoma

Other Complications of Acute Otitis Media

- Facial nerve palsy/paralysis
- Labyrinthitis
- Petrous apicitis
- Labyrinthine fistula
- Extracranial abscesses (e.g., *Bezold's abscess* or *Citelli's abscess*)

Intracranial Complications of Mastoiditis:

- Meningitis
- Sigmoid sinus thrombosis
- Intracranial abscess
- Otitic hydrocephalus



Abbreviations:
 ENT = Otolaryngology
 NPO = Nothing by mouth
 IV = Intravenous

This clinical pathway is meant as a guide for physicians and healthcare providers. It does not establish a standard of care, and is not a substitute for medical judgment which should be applied based upon the individual circumstances and clinical condition of the patient. Printing of Clinical Pathways is not recommended as these documents are updated regularly. Copyright © The Children's Mercy Hospital 2026. All rights reserved.