



American College of  
Emergency Physicians®

ADVANCING EMERGENCY CARE 

# POLICY STATEMENT

Approved February 2018

## *Opposition to Routine Culturing of Skin and Soft Tissue Abscesses*

Revised February 2018

Originated as CR18 and  
approved as a policy  
statement titled "Opposition  
to Routine Abscess Culturing"  
October 2012

The American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) opposes any recommendation and/or requirement that skin and soft tissue abscesses be cultured routinely.

Consider obtaining abscess cultures in selected patients, including patients with signs and symptoms of systemic illness, recurrent infection, or immunosuppression.

ACEP is supportive of notifying patients with positive cultures; however, ACEP opposes federal or state legislation and/or regulation that requires an attending physician to be the person who contacts and notifies patients of positive cultures.