37 y/o male with history of IV drug abuse who now presents with upper extremity erythema and swelling.

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Lateral Radiograph of Left Elbow
Axial CT of Left Upper Extremity
Sagittal CT of Left Upper Extremity
Necrotizing Fasciitis
Lateral Radiograph of Left Elbow

Loss of normal soft tissue planes indicating intramuscular edema
Axial CT of Left Upper Extremity

Muscle edema with loss of fascial borders
Sagittal CT of Left Upper Extremity

Muscle edema
Necrotizing Fasciitis

- Soft tissue infection which is rapidly progressive
- Often begins in superficial fascia, with subsequent extension into deep fascia
- Necrosis caused by microvascular occlusion
- More common in elderly or immunocompromised patients
- Mortality 30-70%
- Due to high mortality, imaging studies should not delay clinical diagnosis and surgical debridement
- Soft tissue gas is only seen in minority of cases
References
