

Recent Changes in Guidelines to Prevent Infective Endocarditis

The American Heart Association recently updated its guidelines regarding which patients require antibiotic prophylaxis prior to dental treatment. **“The new guidelines show taking preventative antibiotics is not necessary for most people and, in fact, might create more harm than good. Unnecessary use of antibiotics could cause allergic reactions and dangerous antibiotic resistance.”**

Based on the new guidelines, **patients who have taken prophylactic antibiotics routinely in the past but no longer need them include:**

- *mitral valve prolapse*
- *rheumatic heart disease*
- *bicuspid valve disease*
- *calcified aortic stenosis*
- *congenital heart conditions such as ventricular septal defect, atrial septal defect and hypertrophic cardiomyopathy.*

The only heart conditions which now require antibiotic prophylaxis are:

- *artificial heart valves*
- *previous infective endocarditis*
- *specific congenital heart diseases (CHD):*
 - *unrepaired cyanotic CHD, including palliative shunts and conduits*
 - *completely repaired CH defect with prosthetic material or device, during the first 6 months after the procedure*
 - *repaired CHD with residual defects*
- *a cardiac transplant which develops a problem in a heart valve*

Dental procedures for which **antibiotic prophylaxis is recommended** in these patients include:

- *All dental procedures that involve manipulation of gingival tissue or periapical region of teeth or perforation of the oral mucosa*

The following procedures and events **do not need prophylaxis:**

- *routine anesthetic injections through noninfected tissue*
- *taking dental radiographs*
- *placement of removable prosthodontic or orthodontic appliances*
- *adjustment of orthodontic appliances*
- *placement of orthodontic brackets*
- *shedding of deciduous teeth*
- *bleeding from trauma to the lips and oral mucosa*

Note: The guidelines for antibiotic prophylaxis in patients with total joint replacement have not changed.

The regimen for oral antibiotic prophylaxis remains the same:

- *2 grams of Amoxicillin 30-60 minutes before procedure (50 mg/kg in children)*
- *600 mg of Clindamycin or 500 mg Azithromycin in patients allergic to penicillins*

Additional information can be obtained at the following web sites:

www.americanheart.org

www.ada.org

www.aaos.org

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