

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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