Preventive Antibiotics for Dental Procedures

In August of 2016 the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS) approved new criteria to specify when it may be appropriate to consider antibiotic use prior to dental procedures. Recommendations are now based on each individual patient and the following information:

- the type of dental procedure to be performed;
- your current health status and health issues;
- if you have a history of infection; and,
- timing since joint replacement procedure.

From this information we are able to make a recommendation on whether or not it is appropriate for you to use antibiotics prior to a planned dental procedure.

Your implant and infection

If you have an orthopaedic implant (such as a joint replacement) please understand:

- A potential complication of these implants is bacterial infections, which occurs in 1-3% of patients. These infections require more surgery as well as the use of antibiotics for an extended period of time. Most infections occur around within one year of your surgery, but they can also occur much later.
- Infections that happen long after your surgery (beyond one year) are thought to be caused by the spread of bacteria from the bloodstream to the implant. Unfortunately, there is no clear scientific evidence to support this theory. We know that many patients with orthopaedic implants frequently have bacteria in their blood that do not spread to their implants.

Infections and dental procedures

Dental procedures have long been considered a potential cause of implant infections, even after the initial orthopaedic post-operative period. The reason for this is that dental procedures can introduce bacteria from the mouth into the bloodstream. Please keep in mind, however, that eating and performing regular oral hygiene at home may also introduce oral bacteria into the blood. Here are important points to consider:

- Traditionally, antibiotics have been provided prior to dental procedures in patients with orthopaedic implants to minimize the bacteria that gets into the blood.
- **The best evidence we currently have does not show that using antibiotics before dental procedures can reduce the risk of infections of orthopaedic implants.**
- The routine use of antibiotics has potential side effects such as increased bacterial resistance, allergic reactions and diarrhea.

Summary of Guidelines

- No dental work for a minimum of two weeks prior to surgery.
- No elective dental work (including cleanings) for six months after surgery. If urgent dental work is required within six months please contact our office as we will prescribe antibiotics during this time.
- Recommendations for use of antibiotics prior to dental work is patient specific and based on the AAOS Appropriate Use Criteria; please speak with our orthopaedic team for your specific recommendation.

For more information visit: http://tinyurl.com/orthodental