

Artificial Joint Pre-medication

SHOULD I TAKE ANTIBIOTICS BEFORE MY DENTAL PROCEDURE?

Introduction

You have a joint replacement from a previous orthopedic surgery.

A potential complication of these implants is bacterial infection, which occurs in approximately 1-3% of patients. These infections require more surgery as well as antibiotic usage for an extended period of time. Most infections occur around the time of the procedure (within one year), but some have occurred much later.

Dental procedures have long been considered a potential cause of implant infections even after the initial orthopedic postoperative period. This is because dental procedures can introduce bacteria from the mouth into the bloodstream. Note however that eating, brushing and flossing at home can also introduce oral bacteria into the blood.

Traditionally, antibiotics have been provided prior to dental procedures in patients with orthopedic implants to minimize the bacteria that get into the blood. Best evidence, however, does not show that antibiotics provided before oral care help prevent infections of orthopedic implants. The routine use of antibiotics in this manner has potential side-effects such as increased bacterial resistance, allergic reactions, diarrhea, and may even cause death.

Patients who have compromised immune systems might be at greater risk for implant infections. Diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, cancer, chemotherapy, chronic steroid use are examples suggesting immunosuppression. Please discuss your potential for immunosuppression with your dentist.

Patients who are immune-compromised might wish to consider antibiotics before dental procedures because of their greater risk for infection.

Questions: Please circle the correct answer

1. Patients with orthopedic implants have which of the following:

- a. 0% chance of infection
- b. 0-1% chance of infection
- c. 1-3% chance of infection
- d. >3% chance of infection

2. Most implant infections are:

- a. Related to dental procedures
- b. Occur around the time of surgery
- c. Related to skin infections
- d. Occur long after surgery

3. Some dental procedures:

- a. Routinely cause implant infections
- b. Are the primary source of implant infections
- c. Never cause implant infections
- d. Allow bacteria to enter the bloodstream

4. Routine pre-medication for dental treatment:

- a. Is not supported by current evidence
- b. May be beneficial for those with suppressed immune systems.
- c. Associated with other unwanted side effects
- d. All of the above

Patient Checklist:

1. I have adequate understanding of implant infections associated with dental procedures:

YES NO

2. My dentist has discussed my specific risk factors with me:

YES NO

3. I need further education and discussion on this issue:

YES NO

4. I am immunocompromised because I have:

5. Based on this educational material and discussion, I will:

Not take antibiotics before my dental procedure.

Take antibiotics before my dental procedure.

Signature _____

Date _____