

Greenwich Hospital

Prophylactic Antibiotics Following Joint Replacement Surgery

PATIENT/FAMILY INFORMATION SHEET

Why do I need to take prophylactic antibiotics?

You may need to take prophylactic antibiotics before certain procedures after having had a total joint replacement. The purpose of prophylactic antibiotics is to protect the joint from infection caused by bacteria that could be introduced into the body during these procedures.

When having **any** type of surgery or invasive procedure, it is important to inform your doctor who will be performing the procedure that you have had a total joint replacement. Your doctor can then make the determination of whether or not prophylactic antibiotics are needed.

Who is at risk for total joint infection after certain procedures?

The following patients are at risk for infection following certain procedures:

- All patients after prosthetic joint replacement.
- Patients with suppressed immune systems, such as those with rheumatoid arthritis, systemic lupus erythematosus, drug-induced suppression, radiation-induced suppression.
- Patients with previous prosthetic joint infections.
- Patients with other medical problems, such as malnourishment, hemophilia, HIV infection, diabetes, cancer.

What types of procedures will I need prophylactic antibiotics for?

- Your orthopedic surgeon will recommend prophylactic antibiotics for some dental procedures, such as:
 - ✓ Having teeth pulled
 - ✓ Periodontal (gum) work
 - ✓ Root canals
 - ✓ Dental cleaning where bleeding is expected
 - ✓ Placement of orthodontic bands
 - ✓ Drainage of abscessed tooth/teeth

What types of procedures will I need prophylactic antibiotics for? (continued)

- Your orthopedic surgeon may recommend prophylactic antibiotics for some urological procedures, such as:
 - ✓ Removal of kidney stones, including shock wave lithotripsy
 - ✓ Endoscopic procedures of the ureters and/or kidneys
 - ✓ Biopsy of any organs of the urinary tract, such as prostate, bladder, kidneys
 - ✓ Any procedure that involves entering into the urinary tract in people at higher risk for infection, such as those with indwelling urinary catheters and stents, or those with a history of recurrent urinary tract infections, prostatitis, or urinary retention.
- Your orthopedic surgeon may also recommend prophylactic antibiotics after joint replacement for other procedures, such as:
 - ✓ Surgeries
 - ✓ Other procedures involving biopsy, such as colonoscopy, sigmoidoscopy, bronchoscopy
 - ✓ Drainage of skin infections

Keep this handout in a file or other safe place. Bring it with you to your doctor's office if you are being scheduled for a procedure. The doctor/dentist performing the procedure may want to consult with your orthopedic surgeon to determine your level of risk for infection and need for prophylactic antibiotics.

My orthopedic surgeon is: _____

Office number: _____

Source: American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgery @ www.aaos.org Retrieved November 2005.

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