

Antibiotic Prophylaxis (Infection Prevention)

After a total joint replacement

Not everyone needs this medication. Only higher risk patients need it.

Diabetics NO LONGER need antibiotics prior to dental work.

Why it matters

Because of the large amount of metal and plastic in a total joint replacement, and because of the manner in which bacteria work, your total joint is at risk for developing an infection if you have any dental or surgical procedures.

Who needs antibiotics

Patients with the highest risk for infection of a total joint replacement include those with:

- Rheumatoid arthritis or any similar disease (lupus, etc.)
- Any other immune system related disease (Crohn's, inflammatory bowel disease, HIV)
- Cancer (except for simple skin cancers)
- Multiple surgeries (2–4 "open" procedures, not arthroscopic) on the joint in question
- Severe scarring in or around the joint in question
- Radiation treatment to the joint in question
- Previous infection of the joint in question

If you have any of the above issues, you will need antibiotics prior to dental work. The current recommendation by the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons (AAOS) is that we continue this prophylaxis (infection prevention) for **lifetime**.

What to take

You will need to take antibiotics **1 hour before** any of those types of procedures. This is typically in the form of 4 pills of Amoxicillin, or another antibiotic if you are penicillin allergic. Any physician or dentist can provide this medication for you.

For some of you, these recommendations will be a change from what you have been told previously. If you have any questions about this or any other issue, please feel free to speak to Dr. Olsen or any of the orthopedic staff about your concerns. We can be reached at **952-831-8742 (TRIA)** at all hours.

Thank you for putting your trust in us to provide you with world class orthopedic care. Please do not hesitate to make any suggestions about how we might improve our service to you or your family.