

Satellite Family Dentistry

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ANTIBIOTIC PROPHYLAXIS GUIDELINES

Dear Patient,

New guidelines for the prevention of Infective Endocarditis were released by the American Heart Association (AHA) on April 19, 2008. The AHA and the American Dental Association now recommend that fewer dental patients with heart disease receive antibiotic prophylaxis before dental procedures to prevent the heart infection called Infective Endocarditis. After reviewing relevant scientific literature from 1950 to 2006, the group concluded that bacteria within the bloodstream are much more likely to occur from ordinary daily activities than from dental procedures. Even if prevention of Infective Endocarditis were 100% effective, which it is not, it would only prevent a small number of Infective Endocarditis cases. The conclusion is very simple: the risk of taking the antibiotics outweighs the risk of acquiring Infective Endocarditis.

People in the following categories **no longer have to take antibiotics prior to a dental visit:**

- Mitral Valve Prolapse
- Rheumatic Heart Disease
- Bicuspid Valve Disease
- Calcified Aortic Stenosis
- Congenital Heart Conditions (Ventricular Septal Defect, Atrial Septal Defect, Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy)

Antibiotics **are recommended prior to a dental procedure** for these patients:

- Artificial Heart Valves
- Prior history of Infective Endocarditis
- Certain specific, serious congenital heart conditions
- Cardiac transplant that develops a problem with a heart valve

The vast majority of patients that took antibiotics in the past no longer have to take them.

These guidelines do not apply to patients who are taking antibiotics following joint replacement surgery.

The AHA guidelines emphasize that maintaining optimal oral health and practicing daily oral hygiene are more important in reducing the risk of Infective Endocarditis than taking preventive antibiotics before a dental visit.

For further information, go to www.ada.org/public/topics/antibiotics.asp

A complete print-out of these guidelines are available in our office if you would like to read more.

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