

## Antibiotic Prophylaxis (Infection Prevention) After a Total Joint Replacement

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. For this reason, 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.

Your dentist or other care providers can provide this medicine for you. If you have surgery in a hospital, they will typically give you an intravenous dose of antibiotics to accomplish the same goal of preventing a joint infection.

The current (and recently updated) recommendation by the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons (AAOS) is that we continue this prophylaxis (infection prevention) for **lifetime**. Patients with the highest risk for infection of a total joint replacement include those with:

- Diabetes (even diet controlled)
- Rheumatoid Arthritis or any similar disease (Lupus, etc....)
- Any other immune system related disease (Crohns, 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.

For some of you, these recommendations will be a change from what you have been told previously. The AAOS has recently determined that given the significant complications and difficulties for patients who develop total joint infections compared to the low cost and risk of simple antibiotic prophylaxis, they can not recommend stopping pre-dental or surgical antibiotics at 2 years after the surgery (as had previously been the case).

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 952-993-3230 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.