

Antibiotics After Joint Replacement

A lifelong precaution

After you have had a joint replacement, you will need to take prophylactic (preventive) antibiotics any time you have a procedure that might bring bacteria into your bloodstream.

Call the Bone and Joint Surgery Center at 206-598-4288 if you have any questions about whether you need to take antibiotics before a procedure you are planning to have.

Now that you have a joint replacement, you must take a dose of antibiotics before any dental or medical procedure or event that might bring bacteria into your bloodstream. Taking antibiotics will help prevent infection in your joint.

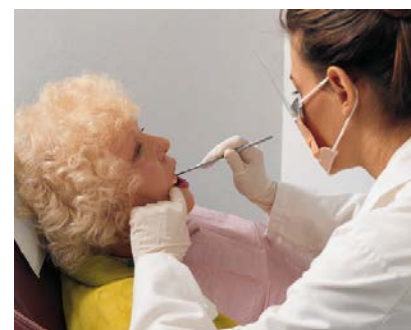
For 3 Months After Surgery

Do **not** have any procedures that involve your *respiratory* system (airway and lungs), *digestive* system (*esophagus*, the tube food goes down; stomach; and intestines), or *urinary tract* (bladder, kidneys, and tubes urine goes through). Also, wait 3 months to have *elective* (not required) dental work after your joint replacement surgery. The only exceptions are if you need an emergency procedure or a procedure to treat an infection.

Dental Work

We recommend a dose of antibiotics before any type of dental work, even routine teeth cleaning. This “pre-treatment” is a lifelong precaution for patients with a joint replacement.

- If you are **not** allergic to penicillin, take 2 grams of cephalexin, cephradine, or amoxicillin by mouth **1 hour before** any dental procedure.
- If you **are** allergic to penicillin, take 600 milligrams of clindamycin **1 hour before** any dental procedure.



After joint replacement, we recommend a dose of antibiotics before you have any type of dental work done.

Your dentist or primary care provider should be able to prescribe these antibiotics for you. If your dentist has any questions, they should call the Bone and Joint Surgery Center at University of Washington Medical Center (UWMC) at 206-598-4288.

If Your Health Care Provider Has Questions

If your surgeon, primary care provider, or dentist has any questions about prophylactic antibiotics, please ask them to call the Bone and Joint Surgery Center at 206-598-4288 at University of Washington Medical Center (UWMC).

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns. UWMC clinic staff are also available to help.

Weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., call the Bone and Joint Surgery Center at 206-598-4288.

After hours and on weekends and holidays, call 206-598-6190 and ask to have the Orthopaedic Resident on call paged.

Non-Dental Procedures

If you are going to have a procedure that involves the respiratory, digestive, or urinary tract, you will most likely need a dose of antibiotics **before** the procedure to protect your artificial joint.

Make sure that the doctor doing your procedure knows that you have a joint replacement and that you need a dose of antibiotics before your procedure. If your surgeon or primary care provider has any questions about prophylactic antibiotics, have them call UWMC's Bone and Joint Surgery Center at 206-598-4288.

High-Risk Procedures

These are some of the procedures that are high-risk for bringing bacteria into your bloodstream. **It is very important to take antibiotics before having any of these procedures:**

Respiratory Tract

- Tonsillectomy or adenoidectomy
- Surgery that involves respiratory mucous membranes
- Bronchoscopy with a rigid bronchoscope

Gastrointestinal (Digestive) Tract

- Sclerotherapy for esophageal varices
- Esophageal stricture dilation
- Endoscopic retrograde cholangiography with biliary obstruction
- Biliary tract surgery
- Surgery that involves the intestines
- Colonoscopy or sigmoidoscopy

Genital and Urinary Tracts

- Prostate surgery
- Cystoscopy
- Urethral dilation

Note

Some health care providers recommend antibiotics before high-risk procedures for only 2 years after your joint replacement surgery. But, UWMC's Bone and Joint Surgery Center advises taking preventive antibiotics before high-risk procedures **for the rest of your life.**