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ANTIBIOTIC USE AFTER TOTAL JOINT REPLACEMENT

You have had an artificial joint implanted to treat the pain associated with your arthritis. This implant is made of metal and medical plastic. Because the materials are not living tissue, they do not have the ability to fight infection. Therefore, it is important for you to take antibiotics prior to certain invasive procedures, which you may have later.

The American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons (AAOS) and the American Dental Association (ADA) have debated this issue for many years. They released a “position statement” on the use of antibiotics, particularly, for dental procedures. You should also follow these guidelines for any procedure related to your urinary or gastrointestinal tracts.

It is recommended that if you have any immune deficiency (chronic diseases such as Rheumatoid arthritis, etc), or you are going to undergo a significant dental procedure, antibiotics should be taken prior to the procedure. This includes routine teeth cleaning, tooth extraction, root canal or dental implants. In addition, the highest risk is within the first two years after your joint replacement surgery, since your body has not fully surrounded the implant with a protective layer. We recommend use of antibiotics after the 2 years also, since the treatment of an infection is very difficult and potentially life altering. Having an immune deficiency means that your immune system is not working normally. Any chronic medical problem such as diabetes or heart disease can contribute to immune deficiency. If you are on any steroid medication, this also contributes to immune deficiency.

The AAOS and ADA have adopted the following recommendations:

- Patients not allergic to penicillin: Keflex or Amoxicillin, 2 grams orally 1 hour prior to procedure
- If unable to take oral medicine, Cefazolin (Kefzol, Ancef) 1 gram or Ampicillin 2 grams IM or IV 1 hour prior to procedure
- If penicillin allergic: Clindamycin 600 mg orally, 1 hour prior to procedure
- If penicillin allergy and unable to take orally: Clindamycin 600 mg IM or IV 1 hour prior to procedure

Please note that the provider that is to perform the procedure is responsible for prescribing any medication. We cannot call in or write a prescription for you unless we are actually performing the procedure.

Please retain this information for future use, especially if you move or are later under the care of a different surgeon. If you, your dentist, PCP or other physician should have any questions, please contact my office. We hope that your joint replacement gives your many years of pain-free, active living,