

Antibiotic Prophylaxis after Spinal Surgery

1. Anyone who has had spinal instrumentation implanted is at risk for developing an infection around the instrumentation from bacteria in the bloodstream. Bacteria can enter the bloodstream through a break in the skin, a break in the lining of the mouth, or from an infection anywhere in the body. Antibiotics should be taken prior to any surgical procedure or invasive testing for 2 years after your surgery.
2. Every effort must be made to prevent infection to your spine. You should always tell your dentist or any physician that you have instrumentation in your spine. An effective method of reducing the risk of infection is to take a prophylactic broad spectrum antibiotic such as Amoxicillin or Clindamycin.
3. If you are having any invasive dental work (filling cavities, root canal, etc.), you must take an antibiotic prior to having the work done. You will also need antibiotics prior to routine teeth cleanings.
4. If you suspect an infection anywhere, you should contact your family physician for instructions regarding treatment. This does not include colds or sinus trouble.
5. It is necessary for most patients to follow this prophylactic plan for two years after the spine instrumentation is placed. Patients who have problems with their immune system or various other medical conditions should check with their family physician for recommended prophylactic instructions.

Antibiotic recommendations per the American Dental and Orthopedic Associations:

- Amoxicillin 500 mg – 4 tablets 1 hour before the procedure.

If allergic to Amoxicillin:

- Clindamycin 300 mg – 2 tablets 1 hour before the procedure.

The above are adult doses. Your doctor will tailor the doses according to your age. Please call your family physician for the antibiotic prescription prior to surgical procedures or invasive testing. Please call prior to your dental procedures for the first antibiotic. Your dentist should then take over antibiotic administration.