

Infection Prevention/Dental Prophylaxis after a Shoulder Replacement

During dental procedures, bacteria that are normally found within the mouth can enter the blood stream. Your immune system is normally able to clear these bacteria without a problem. However, before they can be cleared, these bacteria can settle on your joint replacement and cause an infection. To prevent this problem, all patients with a shoulder replacement should take antibiotics by mouth prior to procedures such as:

- Dental cleanings
- Dental extractions
- Periodontal procedures
- Dental implants
- Root canals
- Placement of orthodontics
- Colonoscopy
- Tonsillectomy
- Bronchoscopy
- Biopsies
- Genitourinary cystoscopy
- Any invasive surgery

For the first three months after surgery, Dr. Chalmers generally recommends that these procedures be avoided.

For the first two years after the replacement, these procedures can be performed, but Dr. Chalmers recommends that antibiotics be taken first.

For patients who are at a high risk, antibiotics should be taken before these procedures forever. High risk patients include those with a history of joint replacement infections, those with inflammatory arthritis, those with diabetes, and those with suppressed immune systems.

Which antibiotic to take:

If you are not allergic to penicillin:

Oral: 2 grams Amoxicillin, Cephalexin, or Ampicillin one hour before.

Intravenously: 2 grams Cefazolin

If you are allergic to penicillin:

Oral or intravenous: 600 milligrams of Clindamycin one hour before.

Whoever is performing the procedure should prescribe the appropriate antibiotic.

You may also contact Dr. Chalmers' office to obtain the antibiotic.