Always remember that bacteria in your bloodstream can get into your artificial joint and cause an infection. To help keep that from happening:

- **Do not** have any dental work done for 6 to 8 weeks **before** your surgery.
- **Do not** have any dental work until 6 weeks **after** your surgery.
- Any infection in your teeth, sinuses, throat, bladder, or any place else, **must** be treated.
- You may need antibiotics before dental work, endoscopy procedures, or other surgical procedure that may put you at risk for infection.
- Tell your family doctor or any other doctor who takes care of you, including your dentist, that you have a joint replacement. This is something you should do for the rest of your life.

The following are general recommendations from the American Dental Association and the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons. Your dentist and your orthopedic surgeons, working together, will recommend the right treatment for you.

**When do you need preventive antibiotics?**
Because you have an artificial joint, your risk of getting a blood-borne infection is higher than normal. It is best to take preventions if the dental procedure involves high levels of bacteria. You should take preventive antibiotics before dental procedures if you:

- Have an inflammatory type of arthritis such as rheumatoid arthritis or systemic lupus erythematosis
- Have a weakened immune system from disease, drugs or radiation
- Use insulin to treat diabetes
- Had a joint replacement less than two years ago
- Have had infections in your artificial joint
- Are undernourished or malnourished
- Have hemophilia

**What procedures require preventive antibiotics?**
You should take preventive antibiotics for:

- Dental extractions (pulling teeth)
- Periodontal (gum disease) procedures
- Dental implant placement and reimplantation of teeth that were knocked out
- Endodontic (root canal) procedure or surgery
- Initial placement of orthodontic bands (not brackets)
- Injection of a local anesthetic into the gums near the jaw
- Regular cleaning of teeth or implants where bleeding is expected

**What kinds of antibiotics are best?**
The following preventive antibiotics are suggested.

- If you can swallow medicines, and are not allergic to penicillin, 2 grams of amoxicillin, Cephalexin, or Cephradine should be taken one hour before the procedure
- If you cannot swallow medicines and are not allergic to penicillin, you should receive an injection of 2 grams of Ampicillin or 1 gram of Cefazolin one hour before the procedure
- If you are allergic to penicillin, 600 milligrams of Clindamycin should be taken by mouth or given by injection one hour before the procedure

These guidelines are to help doctors and dentists make decisions about preventive antibiotics for patients with artificial joints. They are not standards of care and should not take the place of your doctor’s judgment, as each case is different. Your own doctors must use their own clinical judgment as to whether or not preventive antibiotics are right for you.

The information presented is intended for general information and educational purposes. It is not intended to replace the advice of your health care provider. Contact your health care provider if you believe you have a health problem.