

## What's New in the Patient Safety World

January 2025

### Dental Prophylaxis in Patients with Prosthetic Joints

The issue regarding use of prophylactic antibiotics for dental procedures in patients with prosthetic joints has been controversial. In our July 2019 What's New in the Patient Safety World column "[Dental Prescribing Called Into Question](#)" we discussed the somewhat ambiguous wording of previous recommendations that may have led to continued high rates of prophylactic antibiotics for dental procedures in patients with prosthetic hips and knees.

The American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons and the American Association of Hip and Knee Surgeons just issued a limited-strength [guideline](#) stating that routine use of a systemic prophylactic antibiotic before a dental procedure in patients with a hip or knee replacement may not reduce the risk of a subsequent periprosthetic joint infection.

They cite a limited number of studies that have shown no difference in infection rates between those patients who received prophylactic antibiotics for dental procedures and those who did not. Moreover, they cite the downside of such antibiotic use: costs, development of antibiotic resistance, and promotion of *Clostridioides difficile* infection.

They do add that it is important to recognize there may be other considerations that may lead a provider to prescribe antibiotics for an individual patient. This decision should be made with the patient, and the unique risks and benefits for the patient should be considered.

Hopefully, these new guidelines will reassure dental and orthopedic prescribers that such prescriptions are not necessary in most cases.

#### References:

American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons/American Association of Hip and Knee Surgeons. Prevention of Orthopaedic Implant Infection in Patients Undergoing Dental Procedures Evidence-Based Clinical Practice Guidelines. [www.aaos.org/dentalppxcpg](http://www.aaos.org/dentalppxcpg)

Published 11/18/2024 - Approved by the American Association of Hip and Knee Surgeons on 11/07/2024; Accessed December 19, 2024

[https://www.orthoguidelines.org/topic?id=1050&tab=all\\_guidelines](https://www.orthoguidelines.org/topic?id=1050&tab=all_guidelines)

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