

# BACTERIAL ENDOCARDITIS PROPHYLAXIS

## TO YOUR HEALTH - PATIENT EDUCATION HANDOUT

### WHAT IS BACTERIAL ENDOCARDITIS?

Bacterial endocarditis is an inflammation of the lining of the heart caused by blood-borne bacteria that lodge on damaged or abnormal heart valves, or near congenital anatomic defects.

### WHY DO I NEED TO BE PRE-MEDICATED FOR DENTAL PROCEDURES?

Any dental procedure that produces even a slight amount of bleeding from the gums creates a pathway for bacteria from your mouth to enter the bloodstream and travel to the heart. This could increase your chance of contracting bacterial endocarditis.

### WHO NEEDS TO BE PRE-MEDICATED?

Certain cardiac conditions are more often associated with endocarditis than others. Heart murmurs may be innocent and have no pathological significance, or can be signs of other undiagnosed heart conditions. You may not have a problem needing treatment now, but this is being done to prevent a problem for you in the future. As a precaution, we will be premedicating patients with heart murmurs of unknown origin, unless a statement from the patient's physician states it is unnecessary. In addition, the following conditions are recommended for prophylactic antibiotics by the American Heart Association:

- Prosthetic cardiac valves
- Previous bacterial endocarditis
- Most congenital cardiac malformations
- Rheumatic fever with valvular dysfunction
- Hypertrophic cardiomyopathy
- Mitral valve prolapse with valvular regurgitation

### WHAT ABOUT MY MEDICATION?

You are responsible for taking your medication before all dental procedures that might produce bleeding. The standard regimen is for Amoxicillin 500mg. tablets, taking 4 one hour before the dental appointment. If you are allergic to penicillin, then Clindamycin 300mg. will be given, taking 2 tabs. one hour before your dental appointment. These are recommendations by the American Heart Association.

Student Health Center



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