



OXFORDSHIRE
COMMUNITY
DENTAL
SERVICE



Oxford Health
NHS Foundation Trust



Oxfordshire Community Dental Service

Infective endocarditis and your oral health

Going the extra mile to make Oxfordshire smile

What is infective endocarditis?

Infective endocarditis is an infection of the lining of the heart that often involves the heart valves. It's a very rare but serious condition.

Why am I at risk?

Infective endocarditis can affect anyone but people with specific heart problems are at an increased risk. These include:

- Certain conditions affecting the structure of the heart
- Certain conditions affecting the heart valves
- A replacement heart valve
- Hypertrophic cardiomyopathy
- Having previously had infective endocarditis

Why might this affect my dental treatment?

Dental procedures that cause bleeding may increase the chances of bacteria entering the bloodstream and lead to an increased risk of infection. However, everyday activities such as toothbrushing can have the same effect over time.

Reducing your risk of endocarditis

You can reduce your risk of getting infective endocarditis by:

- Cleaning your teeth regularly with fluoride toothpaste

- Going for regular dental check ups
- Cutting down on sugary snacks and drinks
- Living a lifestyle free from smoking
- Cutting down on the amount of alcohol you drink
- Avoiding non-medical procedures that involve piercing the skin, including body piercings and tattoos

Will I be offered antibiotics?

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) recommends that people should not usually be given antibiotics before dental procedures. This is because:

- Dental procedures are no longer thought to be the main cause of infective endocarditis
- There is uncertainty whether antibiotic prophylaxis prevents infective endocarditis
- Antibiotics carry their own risks such as allergic reactions
- Antibiotic resistance is increasing due to antibiotics being used unnecessarily

Your dentist should discuss the risks and benefits of antibiotics with you. It may be necessary for the dentist to contact your cardiologist.

Symptoms of infective endocarditis

You should contact your GP as soon as possible if you notice any flu-like symptoms including high temperature, sweats, breathlessness, weight loss, fatigue or muscle and joint pain, particularly if you have undergone any recent dental

Concerns and complaints

We aim to provide you with a high quality service at all times. However, if you have any concerns, complaints or comments about your experience of our service please tell a member of the team or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service on 0800 328 7971 or at PALS@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk

Please contact us if you would like the information in another language or different format.

Arabic يُرجى الاتصال بنا إذا كنتم ترغبون في الحصول على المعلومات بلغة أخرى أو بتسيق مختلف.

Bengali আপনি এই তথ্য অন্য ভাষায় বা আলাদা আকারে পেতে চাইলে অনুগ্রহ করে আমাদের সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন।
Urdu اگر آپ یہ معلومات دیگر زبان یا مختلف فارمیٹ میں چاہتے ہیں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

Chinese 若要以其他語言或格式提供這些資訊，請與我們聯繫

Polish Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku lub w innej formie, skontaktuj się z nami.

Portuguese Queira contactar-nos se pretender as informações noutra idioma ou num formato diferente.

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