

Date

Ref:

Address of patient

**Please take this letter to your dentist**

Dear

**Preventing Dental Infection in Cardiac Patients**

You have been diagnosed with

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As your Cardiologist, I can confirm that you are at increased risk of cardiac complications from dental bacteria. These bacteria can affect your heart directly as a result of dental infections, including gum disease, or cause problems as a result of some dental treatments.

**What you can do to keep your mouth healthy**

It is very important that you do everything you can to reduce your risk of dental problems in the future. Keeping your mouth healthy and getting regular dental checkups is an important part of this. Your dentist will help you to keep your mouth healthy.

- You should brush your teeth **twice every day** using fluoride toothpaste (with at least 1350ppm fluoride). Spit out the excess toothpaste rather than rinsing it off with mouthwash or water. This is to keep the toothpaste in your mouth for longer to better protect your teeth.
- Your dentist will also show you how to clean the bacteria from between your teeth to further reduce your risk using little brushes or dental floss.
- Check that you are eating healthily, including keeping sugary food and drink to a minimum. This will help to prevent dental problems and also help you to stay healthy.

If you have any dental problems, it is important that you visit a dentist as soon as possible. You do not need antibiotics for a dental check-up, simple fillings or x-rays.

If you do need any of the following dental treatments, we recommend you take antibiotics **one hour before** your treatment to reduce the risk of heart problems due to bacteria from your mouth.

- Scale and polishing
- Dental extractions
- Root treatments
- Any surgical procedure to teeth and gums

This is the guidance from the European Society of Cardiology (2016) and Wessex Cardiologists. The antibiotic recommended is 3gm orally of Amoxicillin or 600mg of Clindamycin (for penicillin allergic individuals) 30 to 60 minutes before the dental procedure.

To obtain the antibiotics you require, you will need to show this letter to your dentist when you go for a dental check-up. They will write you a prescription and explain what you need to do. If your dentist would prefer not to prescribe the antibiotics, we can arrange for the prescription for you. I would be happy to speak to your dentist or GP if this would help you. Please give them my contact details from the top of this letter so they can contact me directly.

Yours sincerely

(Copy of letter sent to patient's GP)