

Dear

You have been diagnosed with a heart condition which increases the risk of serious damage to your heart should bacteria from unhealthy teeth and gums get into your blood.

The safest way to reduce this risk to your health is to work with your dentist to agree a plan on the best way for you to keep your mouth healthy with the added bonus of reducing your need for dental treatment.

What you should do now:

- Ring your dentist to arrange a check-up. Take a copy of the letter from your cardiologist and a list of all your medicines with you to this appointment.
- If you don't have a dentist you need to find one
 - Ask local family and friends which dentist they recommend and contact this practice to see if they can see you
 - Ring 111 and ask for help in finding a dentist
- Brush all of your teeth effectively twice every day. Before bed and one other time.
- Spit out the excess toothpaste rather than washing off the protective fluoride with water or toothpaste.
- Eat a healthy diet and keep sugary food and drink to a minimum. Everything you eat and drink between meals should be sugar free.
- If you know how to, you should clean between your teeth with little interdental brushes once every day
 - If you don't know how to do this ask your dentist or hygienist to show you.

These are simple steps which can make a huge difference

Some dental procedures, for example extractions and scaling of teeth, inevitably give bacteria access to your blood. To reduce the chance that bacteria could damage your heart, your dentist will prescribe you antibiotics to take an hour before your treatment. You may be asked to take the antibiotics at the dental practice and then wait for your appointment. This is particularly important if it is the first time you have taken this medication, or if the dentist has not examined you for this particular problem.

If you take warfarin, the dentist will need to confirm your International Normalised Ratio (INR) is acceptable for treatment before you take your antibiotics.

Yours sincerely