









pennsylvania

## **DENTISTS: BE ANTIBIOTICS AWARE**

## **Treating Patients with Dental Pain and Swelling**

American Dental Association (ADA) treatment guidelines state that antibiotics are not needed for most dental pain and intraoral swelling associated with pulpal and periapical infections in immunocompetent adults without additional comorbidities. These patients should undergo definitive, conservative dental treatment (DCDT) due to limited benefit and potential harm associated with antibiotic use.<sup>1</sup>

Pulpal/Periapical Condition	DCDT Immediately Available		DCDT Not Immediately Available	
	Prescribe Antibiotics	Perform DCDT	Prescribe Antibiotics	Refer to DCDT
Symptomatic irreversible pulpitis with or without symptomatic apical periodontitis	X	<b>√</b>	X	Interim monitoring
Pulp necrosis and symptomatic apical periodontitis	X	<b>√</b>	<b>X</b> *	Interim monitoring
Pulp necrosis and localized acute apical abscess without systemic involvement	X	$\checkmark$	$\checkmark$	√ Urgent referral
Pulp necrosis and localized acute apical abscess with systemic involvement	<b>√</b>	<b>√</b>	<b>√</b>	Urgent referral

<sup>\*</sup>If DCDT is not feasible, provide a delayed antibiotic prescription to be filled after a predetermined period if symptoms worsen or do not improve



## **Prophylactic Antibiotic Considerations**

- X Generally not recommended for the prevention of prosthetic joint infections in patients with prosthetic joint implants.<sup>2</sup>
- Recommended to prevent infective endocarditis (IE) only for patients with certain conditions (prosthetic cardiac valves, recurrent IE, congenital heart disease, & cardiac transplants). <sup>3</sup>

This document provides general guidance and does **not** apply to all clinical scenarios. Always assess the individual patient and use your clinical judgment. Refer to ADA guidelines for specific treatment recommendations, definitions, and resources<sup>1</sup>.

**1.** Lockhart PB, et al. JADA. 2019 Nov;150(11):906-21. **2.** Sollecito TP, et al. JADA. 2015 Jan;146(1):11-16. **3.** Wilson WR, et al. AHA. 2021 Oct;e963-e978.