

# 7 Ways Dentists Can Be Antibiotics Aware



Dentists write approximately 9% of antibiotic prescriptions dispensed from community pharmacies. Here are seven simple “how-tos” for safe, appropriate antibiotic prescribing and use when treating dental infections.



1. **MAKE** an accurate diagnosis.



2. If an antibiotic is needed, **PRESCRIBE** the right antibiotic, at the right dose, for the right duration, and at the right time.



3. **USE** the narrowest-spectrum antibiotic that is appropriate for the situation (e.g., amoxicillin, penicillin, cephalexin rather than the broad-spectrum antibiotics clindamycin, amoxicillin-clavulanate, azithromycin).



4. **NEVER PRESCRIBE** antibiotics for viral infections.



5. For empiric treatment, **REVISE** the duration of antibiotic therapy to the minimum effective duration based on patient progress and/or test results.



6. **TALK** to your patients about possible harms of antibiotics, such as allergic reactions, drug interactions, *Clostridioides difficile* (*C. difficile*) infection, and antibiotic-resistant infections.



7. **TELL** your patients to take antibiotics exactly as prescribed.



**BE  
ANTIBIOTICS  
AWARE**  
SMART USE, BEST CARE

[www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use](http://www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use)

