Antibiotics after dog bite

Report by Sue Maurice, Consultant
Search checked by Katrina Herren, Research Fellow

Clinical scenario
A 25 year old man presents to the emergency department having been bitten by a dog four hours previously. He has puncture wounds and a 1 cm laceration on his forearm. His wounds are thoroughly cleaned and a dressing applied. You want to know whether to prescribe antibiotics as well.

Three part question
In [healthy adults with dog bite wounds] do [prophylactic antibiotics] reduce [the incidence of wound infection]?

Search strategy
Medline 1966 to 06/98 using the OVID interface. [(exp antibiotics OR antibiotic$ ti.ab.sh) AND (exp bites and stings OR bite$ ti.ab.sh)] AND [exp dogs OR dog$ ti.ab.sh OR canine$ ti.ab.sh)] LIMIT to human AND english language.

Search outcome
Altogether 120 papers found of which one was a meta-analysis of eight other papers.

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author, date, and country</th>
<th>Patient group</th>
<th>Study type (level of evidence)</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Key results</th>
<th>Study weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cummings, 1994, USA¹</td>
<td>8 randomised controlled trials</td>
<td>Meta-analysis</td>
<td>Wound infection</td>
<td>Relative risk of infection in the treated (antibiotic) group was 0.56 (14 patients must be treated to prevent 1 infection)</td>
<td>This was not a systematic review</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Immobilisation after first anterior shoulder dislocation

Report by Wendy Dollery, Senior Registrar
Search checked by Simon Carley, Clinical Fellow

Clinical scenario
A 25 year old man presents to the emergency department with a left anterior shoulder dislocation. This is reduced satisfactory. You wonder how long his shoulder should be immobilised? There is no previous history of a dislocation.

Three part question
In [patients less than 30 years old presenting with first anterior shoulder dislocation] is [early mobilisation better than delayed mobilisation] at [reducing the redislocation rate]?

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author, date, and country</th>
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<th>Outcomes</th>
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<th>Study weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kiviluoto et al, 1980, Finland¹</td>
<td>226 patients aged 16–86 years with primary anterior shoulder dislocation, 53 patients were less than 30 years old</td>
<td>Prospective controlled trial over 1 year</td>
<td>Redislocation rate</td>
<td>6/27 (22%) v 13/26 (50%); p &lt; 0.05</td>
<td>Randomisation not stated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Howelius et al, 1996, Sweden¹</td>
<td>257 patients age 12–40 years with primary anterior shoulder dislocation, 84 patients were less than 30 years old</td>
<td>Prospective multicentre controlled trial over 10 years</td>
<td>Redislocation rate</td>
<td>44/65 (67%) v 40/68 (59%)</td>
<td>10 patients lost to follow up</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Randomisation not uniform
Towards evidence based emergency medicine: best BETs from the Manchester Royal Infirmary. Antibiotics after dog bite.

S Maurice

doi: 10.1136/emj.15.6.382

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