



Chicago Center for Orthopedics at Weiss Memorial Hospital

Your physician has recommended total joint replacement surgery. The risk of post-operative infection is approximately 2% but can be significantly higher in patients who are obese (Body mass index which is a measurement that compares weight to height of greater than 30) or have contributing health problems. The most common infections result from the skin organisms: staphylococcus aureus and coag-negative staphylococci. Table 1 listed below is a list of conditions that may place you at higher risk of infection and Table 2 outlines recommendations to reduce your incidence of infection. Preventing you from a surgical site infection (SSI) is our goal so that you will have a successful result from your procedure. If you have any of the below listed conditions please discuss with your physician.

Conditions placing patients at increase risk of infection

- Obesity (BMI greater than 30)
- Patients with a history of diabetes mellitus
- Uncontrolled diabetes (blood sugar levels not adequately controlled)
- Inflammatory joint disease such as rheumatoid arthritis and systemic lupus erythematosus
- Immunocompromised/immunosuppressed patients: Corticosteroid use (e.g. prednisone), medication to treat rheumatoid arthritis (Embrel/Methotrexate)
- Chronic liver disease
- Previous joint infection
- Infection elsewhere in the body (e.g. upper respiratory infection, urinary tract infection, tooth abscess, gum disease)
- Malnutrition
- Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)
- Prior joint surgery
- Previous prosthetic joint infections
- Skin ulcerations (Psoriasis, dermatitis)
- Malignancy
- Smokers
- Poor skin hygiene
- History of methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus infection (MRSA)



What you can do to prevent infection prior to surgery

- Weight loss if indicated (discuss with your primary care physician and surgeon) to optimize body mass index
- Make an appointment with your Primary Care Physician or ask your surgeon for a referral to one of our Weiss Memorial Hospital affiliated physicians for Medical Clearance prior to your surgery
- Quit smoking (discuss smoking cessation recommendations with your physician)
- Test your blood sugar level and keep it under control
- Make an appointment with your dentist to ensure good dental health prior to your surgery and practice daily oral hygiene
- Practice good skin hygiene prior to surgery by showering for 5 days with the Hibiclens antiseptic soap daily as per the outlined patient instructions (this will be given to you by your physician and/or in total joint education class)
- Use the 2% Chlorahexidine Gluconate (CHG) cloths the day before surgery and the morning of your procedure (this information will be given to you by your physician and/or in total joint education class)
- **Notify your surgeon** if you develop a cold, fever, infection of any type or a blister, abrasion, pimple or lesion of any type to the area that your surgeon will be operating on or in another area (e.g. ingrown toenail, dental problems, urinary tract infection) as an underlying infection could spread to the newly placed total joint implant. **If there is any question regarding a potential infection prior to your surgery, it is better to post-pone your procedure than risk a joint infection.**