

Prophylaxis against infective endocarditis overview

NICE Pathways bring together all NICE guidance, quality standards and other NICE information on a specific topic.

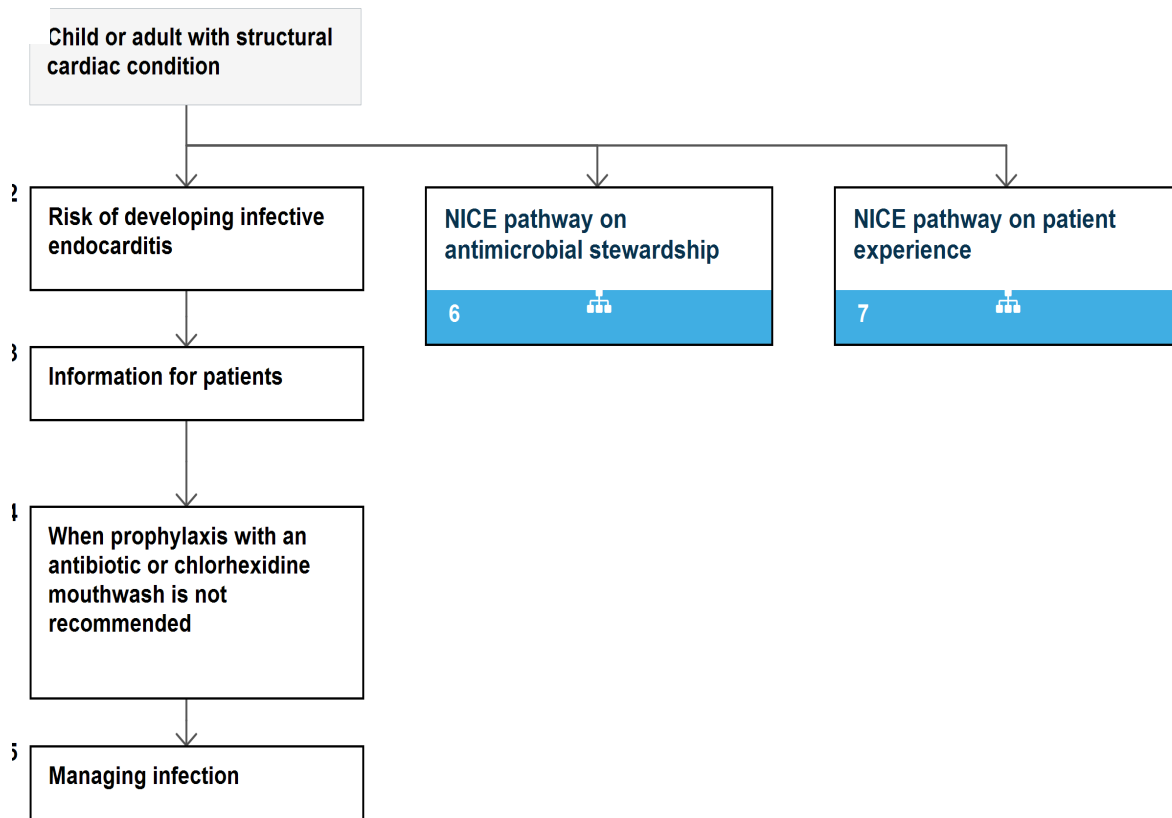
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<http://pathways.nice.org.uk/pathways/prophylaxis-against-infective-endocarditis>

Pathway last updated: 11 November 2016

This document contains a single pathway diagram and uses numbering to link the boxes to the associated recommendations.

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1 Child or adult with structural cardiac condition

No additional information

2 Risk of developing infective endocarditis

Healthcare professionals should regard people with the following cardiac conditions as being at increased risk of developing infective endocarditis:

- acquired valvular heart disease with stenosis or regurgitation
- hypertrophic cardiomyopathy
- previous infective endocarditis
- structural congenital heart disease, including surgically corrected or palliated structural conditions, but excluding isolated atrial septal defect, fully repaired ventricular septal defect or fully repaired patent ductus arteriosus, and closure devices that are judged to be endothelialised
- valve replacement.

NICE has produced a pathway on [structural heart defects](#).

3 Information for patients

Healthcare professionals should offer people at increased risk of infective endocarditis clear and consistent information about prevention, including:

- the benefits and risks of antibiotic prophylaxis, and an explanation of why antibiotic prophylaxis is no longer routinely recommended
- the importance of maintaining good oral health
- symptoms that may indicate infective endocarditis and when to seek expert advice
- the risks of undergoing invasive procedures, including non-medical procedures such as body piercing or tattooing.

NICE has written information for the public explaining its guidance on [prophylaxis against infective endocarditis](#).

4 When prophylaxis with an antibiotic or chlorhexidine mouthwash is not recommended

Antibiotic prophylaxis against infective endocarditis is **not recommended routinely**¹:

- for people undergoing dental procedures
- for people undergoing non-dental procedures at the following sites² :
 - upper and lower gastrointestinal tract
 - genitourinary tract; this includes urological, gynaecological and obstetric procedures, and childbirth
 - upper and lower respiratory tract; this includes ear, nose and throat procedures and bronchoscopy.

Chlorhexidine mouthwash **should not be offered** as prophylaxis against infective endocarditis to people at risk of infective endocarditis undergoing dental procedures.

NICE has produced a pathway on [prevention and control of healthcare-associated infections](#).

5 Managing infection

Any episodes of infection in people at risk of infective endocarditis should be investigated and treated promptly to reduce the risk of endocarditis developing.

If a person at risk of infective endocarditis is receiving antimicrobial therapy because they are undergoing a gastrointestinal or genitourinary procedure at a site where there is a suspected infection, the person should receive an antibiotic that covers organisms that cause infective endocarditis.

6 NICE pathway on antimicrobial stewardship

[See Antimicrobial stewardship](#)

7 NICE pathway on patient experience

[See Patient experience in adult NHS services](#)

¹ 'Routinely' has been added to recommendation 1.1.3 for consistency with recommendation 1.1.2. This addition emphasises NICE's standard advice on [healthcare professionals' responsibilities](#). Doctors and dentists should offer the most appropriate treatment options, in consultation with the patient and/or their carer or guardian. In doing so, they should take account of the recommendations in this guideline and the values and preferences of patients, and apply their clinical judgement.

² The evidence reviews for the NICE guideline on prophylaxis against infective endocarditis covered only procedures at the sites listed here. Procedures at other sites are outside the scope of the guideline.

Sources

Prophylaxis against infective endocarditis: antimicrobial prophylaxis against infective endocarditis in adults and children undergoing interventional procedures (2008 updated 2016)
NICE guideline CG64

Your responsibility

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