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Need for Antibiotics Following Surgical Removal of Wisdom Teeth

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Objectives There isn't a mutual consensus about the prescription of antibiotics after surgical removal of wisdom teeth. Patients often use antibiotics on their own, while the majority of oral surgeons prescribe them even when they are not necessary. Aim of this study was to evaluate patients' and oral surgeons' opinion on antibiotic therapy after surgical removal of wisdom teeth.

Methods Prospective, clinical study conducted in the Department of Oral Surgery, Faculty of Dentistry (University of Belgrade) enrolled 130 operated examinees. Patients completed the survey before surgery while surgeons did it regarding the clinical parameters. Subjects were divided into two groups and the results were statistically analyzed with descriptive statistics and Chi-square test.

Results Postoperative antibiotic therapy was prescribed to 103 patients (79.2%). Patients expected antibiotic therapy due to the prevention of infection (47%) and faster recovery (27%). Every fourth examinee did not expect antibiotic therapy, which wasn't related to sex, age and level of education ($p=0.302$; $p=0.517$; $p=0.097$).

Surgeons decided to prescribe antibiotics after the surgeries that lasted longer than 25 minutes ($p=0.005$) and the ones that required bone removal ($p=0.001$).

Conclusions Most of the patients expect antibiotic therapy after surgical removal of wisdom teeth. Surgeons usually prescribe antibiotics according to clinical evaluation and own experiences. Encouraging fact was that patients rarely decide to take antibiotics on their own.