

P.E.A.R.L.S Practical Evidence About Real Life Situations



Prophylactic antibiotics in mammalian bites may prevent wound infection

Clinical Question	Do prophylactic antibiotics in mammalian bites prevent wound infection?
Bottom Line	Prophylactic antibiotics may reduce the rate of infection after bites by humans NNT =2 (based on 1 study) and after animal bites on the hand (NNT 3 to 7) based on 3 studies. Bites on head and trunk did not seem to benefit from antibiotics.
Caveat	Only 8 studies were involved, some quite small.
Context	Bites by mammals are a common problem, accounting for up to 1% of all visits to hospital emergency rooms. Dog and cat bites are most common, and school-age children make up almost half of those bitten
Reference	Medeiros I, Saconato H. Antibiotic prophylaxis for mammalian bites. <i>Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews</i> 2001, Issue 2. Art. No.: CD001738. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD001738. Note: this review contains 8 studies with 522 participants.
Date (Author)	July 2007 (Brian R McAvoy)

NNT = numbers needed to treat to benefit one person

NNH = numbers needed to harm to benefit one person

Both NNT and NNH are only reported if the studies or pooling of studies is statistically significant

Disclaimer : The P.E.A.R.L.S. are for educational use only and are not meant to guide clinical activity nor are they a clinical guideline