Guidelines on antibiotic use in Veterinary Dentistry

Antibiotic use in dentistry is always controversial. Blanket use of antibiotics is never indicated and their use should always be carefully considered.

Antibiotic administration may decrease the bacterial load and help prevent systemic infection when used prophylactically. Antibiotic therapy should be used when there are signs of systemic disease.

ANTIBIOTIC PROPHYLAXIS

- Prevent bacteraemia and distant infection
- Prevent surgical wound infection (when the risk of the procedure is associated with a high risk of infection). Length of surgery and amount of tissue damage are major contributing factors to wound infection

Antibiotic prophylaxis is recommended in the following cases:

- Maxillo-facial trauma
- Oncological surgery
- Partial pulpectomy procedures
- Immunocompromised animals, animals with organ failure or metabolic failure

ANTIBIOTIC THERAPY

- Used to treat established oro-dental infections

Antibiotic therapy is recommended for the following cases:

- Soft tissue infection (cellulitis secondary to endodontic infection, chronic gingivostomatitis)
- Osteomyelitis
- Jaw fractures with teeth in the fracture line
- Severe soft tissue trauma

Antibiotics alone should not be used to treat gingivitis or periodontitis. The treatment of periodontal disease is scaling, subgingival curettage, polishing, and possibly extractions and periodontal surgery.