

# Antibiotic Prescription and Dental Practice within Saudi Arabia; the Need to Reinforce Guidelines and Implement Specialty Needs

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## Abstract

The aim of the present survey was to analyse the frequency and type of antibiotic prescriptions used in dental practice in Saudi Arabia, to assess the awareness of periodontal treatment need among dentists and specialists and to evaluate the distribution of dental specialties in Saudi Arabia. We distributed a questionnaire to 378 dentists including different specialists working in various major hospitals and dental departments. This same questionnaire was then redistributed, 3 years later, to 211 participants. Results from both surveys indicated that antibiotics were not always prescribed on a scientific basis. Cost was the most significant factor ( $p < 0.05$ ). Interestingly, and although periodontal disease was included as one of the possible causes of infections, the penicillin group was shown to be the group of choice ( $p < 0.007$ ) and was prescribed by 45% of all participants, metronidazole and tetracyclines followed and were the two commonly prescribed antibiotics in both surveys ( $p < 0.05$ ). It was further demonstrated that although the need for periodontics is present among patients and specialists, it is one of the least practiced specialties ( $P \leq 0.008$ ) along with oral surgery ( $P \leq 0.36$ ).