



Dear Lorraine

Antibiotic alternatives for caesarian section infection prophylaxis

The discovery of antibiotics by the fathers of science decades ago has saved millions of people's lives. However, millions have also succumbed because of antibiotic drug resistance or as a result of the unavailability of appropriate antibiotic of choice. It is increasingly becoming difficult to manage patients with limited or no effective antimicrobial choices. The pipeline research and development has groundbreaking high lead targets.

According to 2017 antimicrobial guidelines by Du Buisson, the basis of antibiotic surgical prophylaxis originated from the fact that a third of hospitalised patients get wound infections. The prescriber has to follow some outlined guidelines to rationally select surgical antibiotic prophylaxis. To narrow the discussion, the focus will be on caesarian section. It is evident, according to the guidelines by Du Buisson published in 2017, that the first-generation cephalosporins (e.g. cefazolin) can be given in high-risk patients (e.g. those with premature rupture of membranes or emergency surgery) as there is a lower rate of postoperative infection following prophylactic antibiotic use. In this setting, healthcare workers should take preventative steps to prevent harm to both the mother and the infant. It is for this reason that the focus is to investigate which antibiotic alternatives are available for cephalosporin-allergic patients.

Other reasons are related to the current role of the pharmacist as part of decision-making bodies, such as Pharmacy Therapeutic Committees (PTC). The responsibility lies with pharmacists to procure the right selection of antibiotics for the population in need of a caesarian section. I would like to hear the views or opinions of other pharmacists regarding this topic.

Yours sincerely

Bathandwa Gobingca (B.Pharm)

Note: Pharmacists are welcome to share their experiences with the SAPJ. Ed.