

Vancomycin powder doesn't cut infection post-spine surgery

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Image courtesy of Blausen Medical

(HealthDay)—For patients undergoing spinal procedures, the local application of vancomycin powder in surgical wounds does not significantly reduce the incidence of infection, according to a study published in the Dec. 1 issue of *Spine*.

Vijay Ramappa Tubaki, from Ganga Hospital in Coimbatore, India, and colleagues randomized 907 patients with various spinal pathologies who were treated surgically during a period of 18 months to receive either standard systemic prophylaxis only (controls) or vancomycin powder in the surgical wound plus systemic prophylaxis (treatment group). Infection incidence was evaluated as the primary outcome.

The researchers found that the incidence of infections was 1.68 percent in the [control group](#) (six deep and two superficial), compared with 1.61

percent in the treatment group (six deep and one superficial). Bacteria were cultured in three cases in each group, with one case of *Escherichia coli* and two of *Staphylococcus aureus* in the control group and one case of *Staphylococcus aureus* and two of *Klebsiella* in the treatment group. The use of vancomycin powder was not associated with any adverse effects. The infection rate did not differ significantly between the groups.

"The use of [vancomycin](#) powder may not be effective when incidence of infection is low," the authors conclude.

More information: [Abstract](#)
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