

**UAMS MEDICAL CENTER**  
**ACS SERVICES MANUAL**

**SUBJECT:** Management of Open Fractures  
**UPDATED:** 2/25/2020, 5/23/2022, 10/06/2022

**PAGE:** 1 of 2  
**EFFECTIVE:** 12/15/2022

**RECOMMENDATION(S):** Kyle J. Kalkwarf, MD **APPROVAL:** 12/15/2022  
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**PURPOSE:** To facilitate appropriate and timely management of patients with musculoskeletal injury

**MANAGEMENT OF OPEN FRACTURES:**

1. Sterile dressing with normal saline-soaked gauze
2. Irrigation of gross contamination at the discretion of the orthopedic attending
3. IV ABX should be given within 1 hour of ED arrival. ABX selection is outlined in Table 1

Table 1. Antibiotic Selection by Fracture Type			
<u>Fracture/Wound Type (including GSW)</u>	<u>First-line Agent(s)</u>	<u>Alternative Agent(s) for known anaphylaxis to PCN or cephalosporins</u>	<u>Duration</u>
<b>Type I: Blunt or Penetrating</b> <1 cm and clean	Cefazolin 2 g IV q8h	Clindamycin 900 mg IV q8h	ABX should be initiated within 1 hour of arrival
<b>Type II: Blunt or Penetrating</b> 1-10 cm without significant soft tissue damage/involvement			
<b>Type III: Blunt or Penetrating</b> >10 cm, segmental fx (e.g., multiple fx to same bone), extensive soft tissue damage, traumatic amputation, femur fx	Ceftriaxone 2 g IV q24h	Clindamycin 900 mg IV q8h PLUS Gentamicin 5 mg/kg IV x 1 dose	ABX should be started within 24 hours after initial debridement and closure, either via primary repair or negative pressure dressing OR <b>no more than 72 hours total from time of injury</b>
<b>Contamination</b> Farm-related, crush or vascular injury, fecal contamination, standing water, soil	Above ABX PLUS Metronidazole 500 mg IV q12h x 24h		
<b>Open Mandible fx</b>	None		
<b>Facial fx (closed or open), Open Skull fx (without CSF leak)*, Sinus, Anterior/Posterior Table</b>	None	None	ABX should NOT be given solely for presence of a drain
*For <b>Open Skull fx with CSF leak</b> , please see Traumatic Pneumocephalus Guidelines for appropriate management -ABX with similar spectrums used for other injuries may suffice but must be discussed with trauma attending or pharmacist			

4. If there is open tissue (blunt or penetrating mechanism) over a bone that may be fractured, but the patient is not able to get radiography images to properly diagnose a fracture and give antibiotics less than one hour after arrival, antibiotics should be given empirically until the presence or absence of an open fracture is confirmed. This should be done to limit underdosing of antibiotics for open fractures.
5. Open fractures should be fixed operatively within 24 hours. If this is not possible, they should be washed out at the bedside by the orthopedic team within 24 hours of injury.
6. For all fracture types, patients must receive cefazolin (or clindamycin, if allergy) within 1 hour of the start of surgery. In cases where it has been more than half of the typical redosing interval, an additional pre-op dose must be given.
7. The open fracture wound should be surgically covered (flap) within 4 days definitive fixation.

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**PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT MONITORING:** (Expected Outcomes)

1. Time of Injury to initial washout of open fracture: within 24 hours.
2. Timing of antibiotics prior to or within 1 hour of Emergency Department arrival.
3. Timing of surgical wound coverage within 4 days from definitive fixation.

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