

Returning to Work: Interim Guidance Toolkit Pre, During, & Post Dental Treatment

Considerations PRIOR to dental treatment:

1. Treat every patient as though they are COVID-19 positive.
 - FDA approved test for COVID-19 are not available to dentist in the US, therefore, dentist should be aware that asymptomatic healthy appearing patients **cannot** be assumed to be COVID-19 free.

2. Adhere to **Standard Precautions**
 - Standard Precautions are minimal infection prevention practices applied to all patient care regardless of infection status.
 - Standard Precautions include:
 - Hand hygiene, use of PPE, sharps safety, safe injection practices, instrument sterilization, respiratory hygiene/etiquette, clean and disinfected environmental surfaces.¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/infectioncontrol/pdf/safe-care2.pdf>

3. Adhere to **Interim Infection Control Protocol**
 - **Transmission-Based Precautions** are the second tier to standard infection control for patients who may be infected with certain infectious agents for which additional precautions are needed to prevent infection transmission.
 - Patient isolation, room ventilation, respiratory protection (N95 masks), postponement of non-emergency dental procedures.
 - Signage for **Contact, Droplet, and Airborne** Precautions
 - [Contact Precautions – Example Sign \(Print Only\) pdf icon](#)[PDF – 1 page]
 - [Spanish Example Sign – Contact Precautions \(Print Only\) pdf icon](#)[PDF – 1 page]
 - [Droplet Precautions – Example Sign \(Print Only\) pdf icon](#)[PDF – 1 page]
 - [Spanish Example Sign – Droplet Precautions \(Print Only\) pdf icon](#)[PDF – 1 page]
 - [Airborne Precautions – Example Sign \(Print Only\) pdf icon](#)[PDF – 1 page]
 - [Spanish Example Sign – Airborne Precautions \(Print Only\) pdf icon](#)[PDF – 1 page]

 - Wear **ASTM level 3** masks and eye protection with side shields or a face shield
 - ASTM masks are to be changed between patients
 - Change masks when damaged or soiled during treatment
 - Follow interim Mask and Face Shield Guidelines
https://success.ada.org/~media/CPS/Files/COVID/ADA_Interim_Mask_and_Face_Shield_Guidelines.pdf

- Wear a gown or clinical jacket during treatment
 - Change gown after use if soiled during treatment
 - Disposable gowns should be **discarded** after use.
 - Use professional judgement on when to discard depending on treatment performed and splatter/aerosol created
 - Cloth gowns should be **laundered** after each use.
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/dental-settings.html>

- Adhere to the standard sequence of donning and doffing of PPE
<https://www.cdc.gov/hai/pdfs/ppe/ppe-sequence.pdf>

- No clinical evidence supports the virucidal effects of any preprocedural mouth rinse against SARS-COV-2. (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/?term=32127517>)
 - Consider pre-procedural rinse of .12% Chlorhexidine to reduce **bacterial** load prior to treatment to reduce hazardous aerosol.

- Reduce aerosol and splatter production as much as possible:
 - Prioritize the use of hand instrumentation
 - Use Cavitron selectively
 - Use rubber dams when appropriate
 - If available, use high-volume evacuators (HVE)
 - If possible, use 4-handed technique (help from an assistant)

- Limit paperwork in the operatory
 - If using paper charting, cover with clear barrier
 - Place new chart notes into document outside of patient treatment area

- Nitrous oxide use:
 - Use disposable nasal hood
 - Use disposable tubing
 - If reusable: sterilize according to the manufacturer's recommendations.

During treatment:

1. Follow protocol to prepare treatment room prior to treatment
<https://www.convergedental.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Returning-to-Work-Interim-Guidance-Toolkit.pdf>

2. Review overall health history with each patient
 - Pre-screening questions should have already been asked upon entry into the office.

3. Limit access to the operatory to the **patient only** when possible.
 - Supply a mask and shield to anyone who accompanies the patient

4. No hand shaking

5. Chairside staff should mask prior to entering the treatment room

6. Wash hands prior to donning on gloves

- Gloves should be put on in the room

Post dental treatment:

1. Mask removal and replacement between patients

- Remove your mask outside the treatment room after treatment
- Replace your mask if your mask is soiled, damaged, or hard to breathe through
<https://bit.ly/2SokXXv>

2. Cleaning and disinfecting the treatment room

- Clean the treatment room while wearing gloves, mask, and face shield/goggles
- Dispose of surface barriers after each patient
- Use EPA approved disinfection product against SARS-CoV-2
<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>
- Use the “spray/wipe/spray” or “wipe-discard-wipe” technique
- Give 10-15 minutes of turnaround time between patients for proper disinfection of the treatment room
 - Follow manufacturer’s recommendation on contact time for effective disinfection

3. Post treatment instructions:

- Let patients know that they will be contacted in 48-72 hours to make sure they are not showing any signs of COVID-19 after treatment.
- Ask patients to let you know sooner if they are presenting with COVID-19 symptoms post treatment