



RE-OPENING YOUR DENTAL PRACTICE

PRECAUTIONS

- Move furniture to maintain social distance requirements; put up barriers (if necessary) for additional safety
- Inform staff of new guidelines and how to handle patient communication and interactions
- Make sure that chairs are 6 feet apart
- Do not have people wait in the waiting area/reception room
 - Ask patients to wait in their car or outside and call them when ready.
 - Request for patients who have appointments to come in alone, do not bring family members or friends with them who do not have scheduled appointments
- Patient's perception is key, make sure they see that your office is keeping the office clean
 - Wipe off counter tops, computers, door handles, phones, credit card machines, etc.
 - Post a sign on the front door or counter that says "We put Safety First"
 - Have a hand sanitizer station available for patient use at check in and check out area
- Use a COVID-19 patient screening form
 - Laminate it and place it on front counter at check in area.
 - Upload it to your patient communication platform to be sent with appointment reminders
- Infection Prevention and Control Guidelines to follow during COVID-19 Frequently check the CDC and ADA guidelines regarding infection prevention and control
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 - [Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Patients with Suspected or Confirmed Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) in Healthcare Settings](#)
 - [ADA Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Center for Dentists](#)
- Utilize paperless check in as much as possible
 - Electronic signatures for new patient paperwork, consent forms, etc.
- Consider installing sneeze guards for the front desk/reception area
- Consider HEPA air purifiers for reception areas and medical grade purifiers for operatories.
- Research and utilize methods to reduce contaminants from the [direct source](#).
- Take patient's temperature (touchless forehead scan)
- Add "pens" to items to wipe down - order consider using office branded pens that the patients keep rather than leaving them at the office reception area.

- Clean surfaces prior to disinfecting and be sure to use products that meet EPA's criteria for use against SARS-CoV2.
- Remove reading material, remote controls or other communal objects, or clean them frequently.
- Cover operatory keyboards and mouse with barriers.
- Shock your dental unit water lines if you are returning from an extended break in practice.
- If scrubs are to be worn change between street clothes and scrubs upon exit and entry into the office.

VENDOR CHANGES

- Update any changes you may have made during your closure with professional services and/or vendors
 - i.e. If you changed your PL insurance to apply a part time discount, it maybe time to switch that back.
 - If you have paused your patient communication platforms to refrain from sending out confirmation emails/texts – be sure to turn these functions back on.

SCHEDULING

- Now, more than ever, is an important time to provide access to care for your patients**
 - This could require you to modify your hours for a period of time. Offering early morning, late afternoon and weekend appointments will be highly valuable for your patients as it will likely be difficult for them to take time off work.
 - This will also be necessary in order for you to see the number of patients who have been backlogged during the closure.
- If you haven't already, track the cancelled appointments that occurred during the closure. Utilize these reports to start rescheduling patients by priority**
- Filter through patients to determine who may need priority in scheduling. i.e. patients who were scheduled for treatment, low risk vs high risk patients, etc.**

MARKETING

- Send on-going patient communication via text/email/social media/practice website regarding practice opening dates and new safety protocols
- Send pre-visit instructions with appointment reminders