

## COVID-19 UPDATES – POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TO MINIMIZE RISKS

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed a lot of things about our daily lives. All of us look forward to resuming our normal habits and routines. While many things have changed, one thing has remained the same: our commitment to your safety.

Infection control has always been a top priority for our practice, and you may have seen this during your visits to our office. Our infection control processes are made so that when you receive care, it's both safe and as comfortable as possible.

To minimize risks during the COVID-19 pandemic, our office follows infection control recommendations made by the American Dental Association (ADA), the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). We follow the activities of these agencies so that we are up to date on any new rulings or guidance that may be issued. We do this to make sure that our infection control procedures are current and adhere to each agencies' recommendations.

You may see some changes when it is time for your next appointment. We made these changes to help protect our patients and staff. For example:

- Our office will communicate with you beforehand to ask some screening questions (electronically). You'll be asked those same questions right before you enter the office to make sure nothing has changed. If you start feeling ill with the symptoms of COVID-19 within 14 days of your appointment, call the dental office. You may have already been carrying the virus at the time of your appointment, so anyone who you encountered during that time could be at risk for getting sick too. Also please notify us if any of your contacts are confirmed or symptomatic with COVID-19 within 48 hours following your appointment.
- We will require you to sign an additional consent for services (electronically) during the COVID-19 pandemic before your visit recognizing the risks of a dental visit during the pandemic.
- Your car will be the new waiting room for now. We will be communicating with you via text/call when we are ready for your visit. Of course, we will try to run on time; if you are late for your appointment, it may be necessary to reschedule your visit.
- Masks are required for everyone entering the office. You are responsible for providing your own mask to preserve our PPE.

- We have hand sanitizer that we will ask you to use when you enter the office. You will also find some in other places in the office for you to use as needed. Just a reminder - please practice frequent and thorough hand washing at home.
- We will take your temperature upon your arrival in your car. (100.4 F or over will need to be rescheduled.)
- Our office will be cool for the comfort of the staff using additional PPE, so please bring your own blanket or jacket if you think this could be an issue for you.
- Please brush your teeth at home before your visit as we will not have facilities available in the office to brush your teeth. We will have you pre-rinse in the dental chair prior to your procedure to minimize microbes. Following your appointment, additional time will be allowed for aerosols to settle and for the staff to thoroughly clean the areas where you've been using disinfectants that are effective against the virus that causes COVID-19. This helps reduce the risk of illness being passed to others.
- We are asking only the patient to come inside for the appointment. Only one person, the patient, can enter the building. This means we will not be treating younger children during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- We will get your credit card information upon your arrival by phone in your car if we anticipate any copayment, deductible or fee for your visit.
- After your appointment, we will text or e-mail you the following appointment information and a receipt if applicable. Please contact us if you have any questions about the visit and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

As we monitor the risk level, if there is a surge in incidence of COVID-19, reconsideration of the decision to reopen may be warranted.

We look forward to your visit and are happy to answer any questions you may have about the steps we take to keep you, and every patient, safe in our practice.