



**Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services**

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Concerns regarding treatment of dental patients that may have COVID-19 is increasing. The ADA has taken the step of asking dental practices to see only emergent or urgent patients and delaying any elective procedures. Many states have a much higher infection rate than Missouri. The CDC has not recommended closure of dental practices at this time. With the understanding that circumstances change frequently surrounding a disease outbreak such as this, here are some recommendations for dental practices in Missouri:

1. If you have an urgent or emergent patient to see in your practice, take all precautions necessary to reduce potential exposure to the Coronavirus, such as:
  - a. Screen patients prior to treatment regarding their exposure about their travel and exposure history.
  - b. Take vital signs including temperature prior to treatment.
  - c. Utilize High Volume suction whenever creating an aerosol during dental care i.e. using a high speed hand piece. Reduce or avoid the use of ultrasonic scaler.
  - d. Use a rubber dam on all emergency procedures, and have patients rinse with a 1% solution of hydrogen peroxide prior to treatment.
  - e. Consider having patients wait in their cars to be seen and contact them via cell phone to come into the office and don't allow them to bring family members to waiting room while they are being treated.
  - f. Clean waiting room frequently, especially frequently touched items such as door knobs, counter tops and chair handles.
  - g. Remove any magazines, books, toys or children's coloring books from the waiting room.
  - h. Higher risk employees and staff that may be medically compromised should be allowed to work from home or take time off.
  - i. Any uniforms, scrubs and PPE used in the office are contaminated. Following OSHA guidelines, they need to be laundered at the office or transferred to home laundry in a safe manner such as a closed plastic bag and then immediately laundered.
  - j. Follow proper donning and doffing of uniforms, scrubs and PPEs, and only 1 gown per patient.
  - l. Wash hands, arms and face frequently, especially in between each patient.
  - m. Don't provide treatment to anyone that you suspect having COVID-19 in your dental office. Such patients should be referred to the proper clinical setting after discussions with their medical provider.

References:

CDC [Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Patients with Confirmed Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) or Persons Under Investigation for COVID-19 in Healthcare Settings](#) 3/10/2020  
TL Ricks, USPHS Chief Dental Officer Newsletter, 3/14/2020.  
C White, UMKC School of Dentistry Interim Corona-Virus protocols, 3/16/2020  
CDC [Developing Guidance Regarding Responding to COVID 19 in Dental Settings](#) 3/10/2020  
American Dental Association, recommendations for handling patients with Coronavirus 3/16/2020

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