



Good Morning,

I am reaching out to all patients to discuss the new CDC recommendations and guidelines that go into effect on May 1, 2020. This is a truly difficult time for everyone, and we understand that many of you may be scared or frustrated. I, myself have struggled with many mixed emotions regarding our currently situation. Are we safe? Can our business survive these desperate economic times? How do I protect my family? These are just a few of the questions that are constantly running through my mind on a daily basis.

As many of you are aware, Governor Mills and the CDC have set new guidelines that all dental providers will need to follow. These guidelines are not easy for anyone. As a result, you can expect your dental visits to be very different for next coming months or until recommendations are lifted. Please read the following to understand the practice changes and new patient expectations.

First and foremost, if ***you are sick or have been exposed to Covid-19... Stay Home***. It is safer for you and our employees to limit exposure and risk. Also, if you feel that your dental appointment is not urgent or you feel that it can be postponed please contact us. You may be asked several screening questions before your appointment regarding exposure, risks, and symptoms. In addition, temperature records may be taken when entering the building.

Our waiting rooms areas are too small to allow for proper social distancing, so we will be asking all patients to contact us by phone or text when arriving to your appointment time. When a room is available you will be allowed to enter. Also, due to the gathering limits implemented we ask that only the patient who needs care enter the room. The CDC recommends that all patients wear a mask when entering the building.

Scheduling will be much different to allow for proper social distancing and implementation of new infection control procedures. Adjustment appointments may be limited due to the rigorous restrictions regarding aerosolized procedures and ability to contain denture debris. It is not our intention to reschedule or push out your adjustment appointments, but we must follow the CDC guidelines. Staffing will be limited as well, so your patience is greatly appreciated in advance.

In closing, if you have questions or concerns about any of these precautions or changes to our office policies please contact us.

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What Is a Dental Emergency?



The ADA recognizes that members of the public have questions about whether they should continue to visit their dentist during the COVID-19 pandemic. Because the ADA is currently recommending dentists close their offices to all but emergency care, we have provided guidelines to help patients determine when to consult with their dentist as to whether care should be rescheduled. When in doubt, please call your dentist to determine the best course of action.

Dental care you can reschedule for another time:

- Regular visits for exams, cleanings, and x-rays
- Regular visits for braces
- Removal of teeth that aren't painful
- Treatment of cavities that aren't painful
- Tooth whitening

Dental care that you should have taken care of by a dentist at this time:

- Bleeding that doesn't stop
- Painful swelling in or around your mouth
- Pain in a tooth, teeth or jaw bone
- Gum infection with pain or swelling
- After surgery treatment (dressing change, stitch removal)
- Broken or knocked out tooth
- Denture adjustment for people receiving radiation or other treatment for cancer
- Snipping or adjusting wire of braces that hurts your cheek or gums
- Biopsy of abnormal tissue

For more information, visit [MouthHealthy.org/virus](https://www.mouthhealthy.org/virus).

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What Constitutes a Dental Emergency?

The ADA recognizes that state governments and state dental associations may be best positioned to recommend to the dentists in their regions the amount of time to keep their offices closed to all but emergency care. This is fluid situation and those closest to the issue may best understand the local challenges being faced.

DENTAL EMERGENCY

This guidance may change as the COVID-19 pandemic progresses. Dentists should use their professional judgment in determining a patient's need for urgent or emergency care.

Dental emergencies are potentially life threatening and require immediate treatment to stop ongoing tissue bleeding, alleviate severe pain or infection, and include:

- Uncontrolled bleeding
- Cellulitis or a diffuse soft tissue bacterial infection with intra-oral or extra-oral swelling that potentially compromise the patient's airway
- Trauma involving facial bones, potentially compromising the patient's airway

Urgent dental care focuses on the management of conditions that require immediate attention **to relieve severe pain and/or risk of infection and to alleviate the burden on hospital emergency departments. These should be treated as minimally invasively as possible.**

- Severe dental pain from pulpal inflammation
- Pericoronitis or third-molar pain
- Surgical post-operative osteitis, dry socket dressing changes
- Abscess, or localized bacterial infection resulting in localized pain and swelling
- Tooth fracture resulting in pain or causing soft tissue trauma
- Dental trauma with avulsion/luxation
- Dental treatment required prior to critical medical procedures
- Final crown/bridge cementation if the temporary restoration is lost, broken or causing gingival irritation
- Biopsy of abnormal tissue

Other urgent dental care:

- Extensive dental caries or defective restorations causing pain
 - Manage with interim restorative techniques when possible (silver diamine fluoride, glass ionomers)
- Suture removal
- Denture adjustment on radiation/oncology patients
- Denture adjustments or repairs when function impeded
- Replacing temporary filling on endo access openings in patients experiencing pain
- Snipping or adjustment of an orthodontic wire or appliances piercing or ulcerating the oral mucosa

DENTAL NON EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Routine or non-urgent dental procedures includes but are not limited to:

- Initial or periodic oral examinations and recall visits, including routine radiographs
- Routine dental cleaning and preventive therapies
- Orthodontic procedures other than those to address acute issues (e.g. pain, infection, trauma) or other issues critically necessary to prevent harm to the patient
- Extraction of asymptomatic teeth
- Restorative dentistry including treatment of asymptomatic carious lesions
- Aesthetic dental procedures

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FOR THE LATEST UPDATES, VISIT [ADA.ORG/VIRUS](https://ada.org/virus)