

Letter to Patients During Covid-19

Dear Patient,

Dr. Bennardi and Dr. Barberio want to let you know that we have been studying and researching what we need to do to keep you and our employees safe during this Pandemic. As you know, we have always performed Universal Precautions (surgical masks, gloves, protective eyewear, disinfection of the operatory between every patient, and sterilization of all instruments after every patient).

You will see some additional precautions when you come to your next appointment. The providers and their support staff will all be wearing 7700 respirators (looks like a gas mask), face shields, hair covering, and surgical gowns. Because of our extra garb, the office temperature will be much cooler, so please dress accordingly. We will not be able offer blankets to our patients at this time. We also will be fogging all natural disinfectant throughout the entire office at the end of every procedure day and additional disinfection of public places will take place throughout the day.

We also will be asking you several questions (see below) and giving you information to assure your safety and our safety.

If you answer yes to any of the questions from number 1, please call us immediately.

The doctors also have been in contact with several of your government officials trying to educate them on the importance of dentists being able to test for COVID when a patient arrives at our office. When that becomes available to us, we will let you know. Also, please do not hesitate to contact your government representatives to ask that dentists be part of the testing process. We can be pivotal providers to help our community find those who are positive, thus allowing all of us to get back to "normal" faster.

Covid Guidelines for the Patient the Day Before the Appointment

1. Please answer the following questions truthfully to yourself. This is not anything that you have to fill out and do for us. BUT if you answer yes to any of them, please call the office to let us know as soon as possible.

Have you been exposed to anyone diagnosed with COVID within the last two weeks?

Have you had a fever within the last two weeks?

Have you had any shortness of breath within the last two weeks?

Have you had diarrhea or an upset stomach within the last two weeks?

Have you lost your sense of taste and/or smell within the last two weeks?

Have you had a bad headache and a sore throat at the same time within the last two weeks?

Have you had a bad cough within the last two weeks?

Have you had any chills and/or muscle pain within the last two weeks?

Have you had a runny nose and congestion within the last two weeks?

Have you had blue or purple lesions on your feet and/or toes the last two weeks?

Are you unable to shower before your appointment and then go straight to your dental appointment?

Do you have a time schedule that you need to adhere to on the day of your appointment?

Are you adverse to having your temperature taken at the door of the office?

Are you unable to wear a mask in our building?

Are you unable to rinse your mouth with 1% hydrogen peroxide for 20 seconds?

Are you unable to lay flat when the dentist/hygienist sees you?

Will it disturb you to see the dentist/hygienist wearing a mask that looks like a gas mask, head covering, face shield, and surgical gowns?

Will you be unable to have any of the following in your mouth: bite block, extra suction device, and/or rubber dam or similar device?

2. Please expect delays. Please understand that we are working under new conditions and working with different PPE (Personal Protective Equipment). We will run as close to schedule as we can. We have always prided ourselves for running on-time or close to on-time, but we now have different procedures and we expect delays for patient treatment time (isolation of water spray, changing of PPE, disinfection of patient treatment rooms, etc)
3. Your temperature will be taken at the door (and/or you will be tested for COVID if the tests are available to us). You will be asked to wear a mask as you enter the building and after you are done with your appointment. You will be asked to wear foot coverings (when available) when you enter the building.
4. You will be asked to rinse your mouth with 1% hydrogen peroxide for 20 seconds before the dentist/hygienist sees you.
5. Please expect to be laid back completely flat for treatment. Compromising proper patient position places the provider and assistant in a position to not be able to remove aerosols correctly thus increasing their exposure to the virus.
6. The dentists/hygienists will be wearing large masks that look like gas masks, head covering, face shields, and surgical gowns before, during, and after your procedure.
7. You will have extra suction and/or isolation devices placed in your mouth to decrease the production of aerosols from inside your mouth in addition to all the regular suction devices used in the past.
8. You will be asked to wipe your head, face, neck, arms, and hand areas with hydrogen peroxide wipes after your appointment.
9. Please only bring necessary items into the building (eg. wallet, sweater, glasses, etc).
10. To decrease exposure to those at the front desk, check-out will be streamlined with self-paying patients/co-paying patients giving us their credit card information when they schedule their appointment or at check-in, all paperwork (treatment plans, consent forms, receipts, etc.) will be emailed to you, prescriptions will be faxed to your pharmacy, and the date of your next appointment will be texted to you. You may pay at the front desk though, if you choose.

COVID Guidelines for the Patient the Day of the Appointment

1. Please shower before you go to your appointment and please then go straight to your appointment, do not stop anywhere before your appointment. If this is not possible, please wipe down before coming to your appointment.
2. Please only bring into the office those items that are absolutely necessary for your appointment, eg credit card/checkbook, sweater. FYI, we are not allowed magazines or toys in the waiting room.
3. Enter the office wearing a mask over your mouth AND nose. If you do not have one, we will provide one for you. When available, you will be asked to put on foot coverings after you enter the building.
4. Next disinfect your hands at the disinfecting station and read over the consent form which allows us to treat you during a pandemic.
5. Next go to the window to have your temperature taken.
6. The front staff will direct you to the room in which you will be seen.
7. After you have been dismissed from the treatment room, on the way out the door, please place our mask (if we lent you one) in the labeled container and then also please disinfect your hands at the disinfecting station.

Thank you so much for cooperating with the mandates from the PA Department of Health, CDC, OSHA, PA State Department of Dentistry, American Dental Association, and the Pennsylvania Dental Association