

COVID-19: What to Expect During Your Visit

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The COVID-19 pandemic has changed a lot of things about our daily lives. Now that most dental and endodontic offices have fully reopened, we would like to offer some tips for making sure your visit goes smoothly.

[The American Association of Endodontists has developed guidance on extra steps practitioners can take](#), in addition to the infection control procedures they've always followed, to help protect their patients and staff. Here's what you can expect at your next appointment:

Prior to Coming to the Office:

- Patients can be screened over the phone to evaluate for COVID-19-related risk factors and symptoms.
- Patients can be required to fill all paperwork for registration and medical history online before coming to the office, thus

reducing time spent in office and limiting touch surface contact (this used to be optional before).

At the Office, You Can Expect:

- Temperature check with infrared thermometer for every patient upon entry into the office
- No more than two patients allowed in the office at the same time
- Chairs spaced at least six feet apart
- Accompanying relatives and/or friends wait in the car
- Patients required to wear masks all the time inside the office and remove them only during examination or procedure
- Removal of frequently touched objects in waiting area (magazines, newspapers)
- Installation of glass shield as physical barrier at reception desk to limit close contact between personnel and patients
- Daily temperature check for dental office staff
- Use of the recommended PPE including N95 masks, face shield, hair protective caps and gowns
- Replacing reusables with disposables. For example, disposable protective eyewear instead of plastic goggles for the patients
- Installation of automatic touchless soap dispensers and hand sanitizers
- Installation of air purifiers in waiting room and operatories (OPs)
- Increased frequency of disinfection of frequently touched surfaces, door handles, bathrooms, front desks, etc.
- Minimizing overlapping dental appointments

In the Operatories:

- Windows are frequently opened to allow fresh air to circulate.

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- Pre-operative CBCT scans for most cases to expedite the treatment i.e. estimated working length, number of canals, anatomy, etc.)
- Hydrogen peroxide oral rinse prior to procedure to reduce the level of microorganisms in aerosols during dental procedures
- Use of two high-volume evacuation suctions during access opening

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All these precautions -- along with the consistent use of rubber dam, which 100 percent of endodontists use – minimizes the risk of transmission.

