



Arkansas Department of Health

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Governor Asa Hutchinson
José R. Romero, MD, Secretary of Health

Recommended Guidelines for Dental Treatment

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Screening Guidelines

- Verbally screen everyone (patients and dental healthcare provider, DHCP) entering the facility for symptoms of COVID-19 and recommend that patients/DHCP who meet the criteria below should delay treatment (or remain at home) until such symptoms abate:
 - Have symptoms associated with COVID-19
 - Had close contact with a person known to be infected with COVID-19 within the previous 14 days, unless they themselves are fully vaccinated,
 - Awaiting a pending COVID-19 test result OR had a positive test for COVID-19 in last 10 days.

Management of Patients

- Identify patients with an acute respiratory illness and defer treatment unless it is an emergency case. Ask such an emergency patient to remain in their automobile until summoned directly to the treatment area with a preferred time toward latter part of day's schedule.
- Reception room considerations:
 - CDC recommends that all healthcare facilities should continue to have everyone present wear masks and practice physical distancing.
 - Request patients limit the number of visitors that accompany them to their dental appointment.
 - Provide alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, tissues, and no-touch receptacles for waste disposal

Treatment Considerations of Patients

While maintaining an adherence to the proper screening and disinfectant protocols that have been established, the DHCP may utilize their own professional judgement regarding patient flow and treatments that are performed. Because of aerosol production during dental treatments, the ADH recommends the following recommendations, in addition to established universal precautions, to minimize the possibility of disease transmission:

- N95 respirators, or comparable type, is recommended for the treatment team (dentist, dental hygienist, dental assistant) which *provides the lowest risk of infection* against the COVID-19 virus for the DHCP. A type 1 surgical mask along with a face shield or goggles may serve as optional PPE although the protection afforded is less than provided by N95 respirators.
- Preprocedural rinses with antimicrobial product (chlorhexidine gluconate, cetylpyridinium chloride, or 0.2% povidone-iodine) to reduce levels of oral microorganisms present in aerosols.

- Treatment requiring the use of a dental instrument resulting in aerosol production:
 - Along with eye protection and gloves, ADH recommends clinical team members utilize a long sleeve jacket or disposable gown.
 - Cloth gowns can be laundered and reused indefinitely,
 - Disposable gowns may be reused unless visibly soiled or the integrity of the gown is compromised.
 - Recommend using a dental dam for the best isolation of the treatment area.
 - Place high-volume evacuation as close to the surgical site to capture the generated aerosols,
 - When a dental dam is not feasible when ultrasonic or piezo instrumentation is utilized, recommend usage of a four-handed approach to better capture generated aerosols.
 - HVE devices such as Dry Shield, Isolite, SafetySuction, Zirc Mr. Thirsty are deemed suitable substitutes

References:

- EPA: [List N: Disinfectants for Use Against COVID-19](#)
- American Chemistry Council & Center for Biocide Chemistries: [Novel Coronavirus-Fighting Products](#)
- CDC February 2021: [Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Patients with Suspected or Confirmed Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) in Healthcare Settings](#)
- OSHA: <https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus/control-prevention/dentistry>