



Indiana Restorative Dentistry

Prosthodontic, Implant and Esthetic Dental Specialist

Covid-19 Infection Control Plan and Safety Measures

April 2020

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April 27, 2020

Dear patients and team:

Since moving here in 2017, you have welcomed me and I have come to consider you as dear friends and family. Since the Covid-19 pandemic began, you have weighed heavily on my thoughts. Many of you have family in hot spot areas. Others may have comorbidities that may make the disease more serious. And yet others may have found themselves without work. Life has changed dramatically. Some have asked, “How will you keep your dental office safe?” To that end, I wanted to review some of the adjustments we have made so that each person entering the office feels safe and secure in receiving your dental care.

Infection control and safety has always been critical at Indiana Restorative Dentistry and this has only been reinforced by the COVID-19 pandemic. We have always adhered to universal precautions – assuming every patient could be a carrier of disease – and with COVID-19 we have further elevated our standard to provide the safest environment for our patients, team members, and their loved ones.

To that end, additional training, equipment, and protocols have been implemented and reinforced as outlined below. This includes basic protocols, such as handwashing which is considered the most effective way to prevent the spread of disease; the proper use of personal protective equipment; and implementing other recommendations as advised by the American Dental Association, Indiana Dental Association, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Some of these recommendations include daily self-monitoring amongst team members, social distancing, spacing of appointments, and other engineering controls such as partitions, air filtration units, and enhanced personal protective equipment.

While it is impossible to completely eliminate all risk of disease transmission, with the implementation of these protocols the risk of exposure is low. Thank you for your help and support in these unprecedented times. It is with your help that we can continue to make Indiana Restorative Dentistry the safest place for the highest quality of dental care.

Respectfully,

Tyler Thomas, DMD



Team Member Actions Prior to and Concluding Shift



Before Leaving Home

- Take temperature and do not go into work if you or family members are experiencing symptoms; cough, sore throat, fever, etc. A fever is 100.4° F or greater according to CDC, but if an employee feels sick, they should not come in.
- Tie hair up, keep nails short, avoid extra accessories.
- Place phone in a Ziplock bag that you will discard at the end of the day.
- If bringing lunch, place in disposable wrapping.
- Practiced the appropriate use of personal protective equipment (PPE) prior to caring for a patient to prevent contamination.

Before Shift

- Change into scrubs and work shoes (preferably wipeable) as soon as you arrive.
- Use PPE wisely and appropriately.
- Leave all clutter (pens, phones, etc.) outside of patient operatory rooms in employee storage area. Cell phone use should be avoided if at all possible.

After Shift

- Wash hands and arms with soap prior to changing.
- Remove scrubs and place in laundry hamper.
- Wash hands and put on clean clothes.
- Sanitize phones, glasses, etc.
- Wash hands again.



After Arriving at Home

- Shower with soap and water before touching anything (including loved ones).



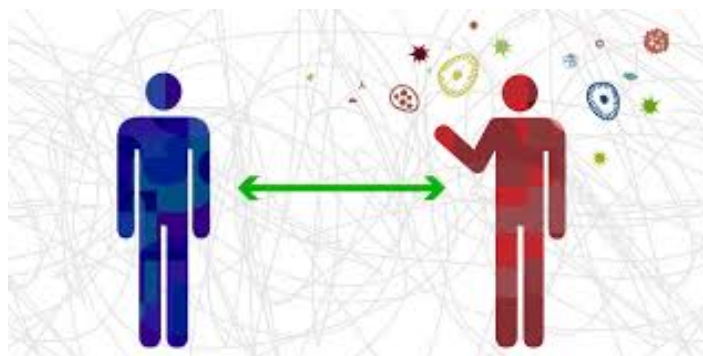
Patient Safety and Social Distancing

Maintaining a Low Risk Environment

- Filter patients during the phone call when scheduling appointments using established and recommended screening checklists.
- Patients should be asked to come wearing face masks.
- Prepare scripts and questions to recognize potential carriers.
- Reschedule patients who show any sign of a cough or fever or who describe any concerning warning signs.
- Instruct patients to call ahead and reschedule their appointment if they develop symptoms of respiratory infection (ie. cough, sore throat or fever).
- Clean phone handsets after use.
- Minimize number of users at workstations.

Promoting Social Distancing

- The scheduling of patients has been spread out to minimize the number of patients in the waiting room.
- Prioritizing high risk patients with early morning appointments to minimize contact with others.
- Patients should not bring others to their dental appointment if possible. Guardians of minors and care givers may assist the patient in providing treatment consent and entering/exiting the treatment room as needed but should wait in their car or in the waiting room whenever possible, being sure to respecting social distancing.
- Patients are invited to use a “virtual” waiting room if desired: patients can opt to wait in their car or outside the office where they can be contacted by mobile phone when it is their turn to be treated.



Safety Measures

In the Waiting Room

- Limit points of entry to the clinic. There will be one entrance for patients and a separate entrance for deliveries.
- All clutter has been removed of anything that is not easily disinfected.
- Frequent wipe down of waiting rooms, bathrooms, door handles, tables, light switches, computers, etc.
- Visual alerts (ie. Signs and posters) have been posted at the entrance advising patients of the COVID-19 risk and advising them not to enter the facility when ill.
- Masks and tissues are made accessible immediately upon entry and instructions are provided on how to use tissues to cover the nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing and to dispose of tissues and contaminated items in the provided waste receptacles.
- Provide supplies including alcohol-based hand sanitizer, tissues, and no-touch receptacles for disposal.
- Physical barrier partitions have been placed at the reception areas to limit close contact at the reception area.
- Air purification systems have been installed in the waiting room and each operatory. These machines cycle through and clean the air every 5-12 minutes.

With Patients upon Arrival

- Patients should come wearing face masks, which can be removed when treatment starts.
- Immediately escorted to their treatment room and a hand washing station.
- If an examination room is not readily available, ensure social distancing in the waiting room.
- Asked about the presence of symptoms of a respiratory infection and history of travel or contact with possible COVID-19 patients.
- Assessed for respiratory symptoms and fever (with a non-contact digital infrared forehead thermometer).



- If body temperature of 100.4°F or greater they will be advised to seek medical treatment and their visit will be rescheduled.
- As testing for the virus becomes more available, we will be incorporating this added benefit to screen patients.

After the Clinical Treatment

- Health care personnel should follow basic infection control practices between patients (ie. hand hygiene, cleaning and disinfecting shared equipment, etc.)
- The room should undergo appropriate cleaning and surface disinfection before it is returned to routine use.
- All non-disposable medical equipment used for patient care should be cleaned and disinfected according to manufacturer's recommendations.
- Routine cleaning and disinfection procedures are appropriate for SARS-CoV-2 in healthcare settings, including those patient-care areas in which aerosol-generating procedures are performed (ie. using cleaners and water to preclean surfaces prior to applying an EPA-registered, hospital grade disinfectant to frequently touched surfaces or objects for appropriate contact times as indicated on the product's label).

At the End of the Day

- The office will be cleaned and disinfected from top to bottom in preparation for the following day.



Clinical Protocol for our Team

Hand Hygiene

- Considered the most effective way to prevent disease transmission.
- Performed by washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer as appropriate.
- Performed before and after all patient contact, contact with potentially infectious material, and before putting on and after removing personal protective equipment.



Required Personal Protective Equipment

Masks

- Surgical masks and KN95 masks are provided and should be worn throughout the day.
- KN95 masks should be used during any procedure generating an aerosol.
- Masks should be replaced between patients. Surgical masks can be worn on top of the KN95 mask and the outer layer can be replaced between patients.



Eye Protection

- Put on eye protection (-ie. glasses with side shields or face shield) upon entry to the patient room and care area.
- Reusable eye protection must be cleaned and disinfected prior to re-use.
- Disposable eye protection should be discarded after use.



Gloves

- Put on clean, non-sterile gloves upon entry to the patient room or care area.
- Change gloves if they become torn or heavily contaminated.
- Remove and discard gloves when leaving the patient room or care area.



Outer Covering/Gowns

- Put on a clean outer covering/gown upon entry to the patient treatment area.
- Change the gown if it becomes visibly soiled. Remove and discard the gown in a dedicated container for waste or linen as appropriate.
- Gowns should be prioritized for all aerosol-generating procedures and during activities where splashes and sprays are anticipated.

Shoes

- Team members are asked to wipe down their shoes daily and leave their shoes at the office.

Other Considerations

- Gauze should be available as presorted packets and/or included on the instrument trays.
- Keyboards can be covered using a plastic liner.
- As paper, including patient records and charts, cannot be disinfected, the office has transitioned to fully digital electronic records.
 - o Forms will be updated online prior to appointment visits as much as possible.
- A new payment system allows staff to not handle credit cards.



Exposure

As explained above, everything is being done to provide the lowest risk environment possible. Despite these best practices, an employee or patient may still contract the SARS-CoV2 virus. Simply put, there is inherent risk both in and out of the office and it is not possible to precisely pinpoint the source of infection. To that end, the following are advised if a team member falls ill.

- With no symptoms, daily monitoring is advised for all team members.
- Social distancing is advised amongst team members. Masks and PPE should continue to be worn.
- Any team member that becomes symptomatic will be asked to stay home and seek medical care as appropriate.
- If a team member tests positive for COVID-19 they will be quarantined for 14 days. Other team members will be notified and asked to vigilantly self-monitor and continue to practice the highest standards of infection control per CDC and ADA guidelines.

We are confident in these guidelines. They will help create a safe environment for all of our patients and team members. We hope you can feel secure in the knowledge that we are doing everything in our power to provide the safest clinical conditions in order to protect our patients, our team members, and our families.

