

## **NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19, A.K.A. 2019-NCOV) dentalcorp Policy:**

In response to the spread of COVID-19, dentalcorp Practices should:

### **PREPARE**

1. **Follow routine infection prevention and control practices** and additional precautions, including contact and droplet precautions.
  - a. dentalcorp has provided your practice with an IPAC Manual 2020 that contains:
    - i. [Screening signage](#)
    - ii. [Screening questions](#)
    - iii. Policies for:
      - PPE
      - Hand Hygiene
      - Environmental Cleaning
      - [Pandemic Plan Template](#)

**\*Regulated Health Professionals have been advised to only see emergency patients\***

2. **Assess whether your practice has the capacity** to safely conduct a clinical dental examination in **a true emergency situation\***, for patients at risk of having COVID-19. Capacity requirements include access to and ability to safely use enhanced PPE, as well as having an appropriate isolation room and cleaning procedures in place.
  - a. Remember that dentists regularly provide treatment to patients with bacterial infections, influenza, HIV and other communicable diseases
  - b. Taking all precautions, it is possible to provide treatment to patients with COVID-19
  - c. If your practice is not equipped, consider referring patients with a COVID-19 risk to receive treatment in an alternate setting (e.g. other dentalcorp practice, specialist office, or hospital setting)
  - d. Contact the Compliance Team if you have any uncertainties about the above

### **ASSESS**

3. **Assess the patient for COVID-19 symptoms:**
  - a. The patient must be screened for acute respiratory illness, including COVID-19:
    1. Presence of a fever
    2. Cough, especially a dry cough
    3. Difficulty breathing
    4. Travel to an affected area in the past 14 days
    5. Airline travel in the past 14 days
    6. Close contact with a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19
    7. Close contact with a person with acute respiratory illness who has returned from travel to an impacted area

4. **Assess the patient to determine if it is a true dental emergency situation**
  - a. \*In dentistry, a “true emergency situation” includes trauma, significant infection, prolonged bleeding or pain which cannot be managed by over-the-counter medications.
  - b. Whenever possible, emergency cases should be managed via telephone by taking a verbal history of the patient’s condition and providing appropriate advice, consultation and pharmacotherapy if indicated.
5. For patients that present with an emergency and **CANNOT** be managed without generating an aerosol (i.e. high-speed handpiece or air-water syringe **MUST** be used), use precautions such as:
  - a. Appropriate PPE-check regulatory guidelines, this includes the use of N95 masks or their equivalents ([PPE Chart](#))
  - b. Aerosol-generating procedures should be avoided wherever possible
6. If the patient screens negative for acute respiratory illness, including COVID-19,
  - a. Care may be provided using routine practices and contact/droplet precautions (i.e. procedure/surgical mask, gloves and eye protection), as long as no aerosols will be created.
  - b. If an aerosol will be generated, then care **MUST** be provided using enhanced precautions, **as per provincial regulatory guidelines.\***
7. If the patient screens positive for acute respiratory illness, including COVID-19, then care must be provided **as per provincial regulatory guidelines.\***
  - a. If emergency care is required, you must use enhanced precautions
  - b. \*Some provinces require such patients to be referred to hospitals or specially designated facilities (e.g., AB, MB, NS, QC).

\*If significant aerosol will be generated, then care **MUST** be provided using enhanced precautions (i.e. fit-tested N95 mask, gloves, eye protection, face shield, hair and shoe covers, and protective gown).

#### **PROVIDING TREATMENT**

8. How to respond to a suspected positive COVID-19 patient in your dental practice:

Please refer to: ([Best Practices for Managing the Covid-19 Patient](#))

- a. If the patient can be managed until their COVID19 symptoms resolve, do that.
- b. When your office is unable to provide treatment to a patient with COVID-19, find an alternative location for dental treatment
- c. As **a last resort**, or if required by your provincial regulator, consider referring the patient to the hospital based dental clinic.

#### **REPORT**

9. **Report all suspected cases of COVID-19** to your local Public Health Agency and determine next steps