

Dental Partners of Newburyport

Guidelines for Patients in response to COVID-19

Our office will be opening for non-emergent routine care **Tuesday May 26, 2020** with dental hygiene appointments starting **June 8, 2020**. This document is an overview of the steps we have taken at our office in response to the COVID-19 global pandemic. Please read this document carefully as it contains information you will need prior to coming to our office. If you have any questions or concerns, please ask any of our team members. We have all been trained and are working hard to ensure a safe environment for YOU and US.

While we have always practiced Universal or Standard Precautions with regards to Infection Control in our office, we have made some changes to enhance the safety in our office. Some of these changes will hopefully only be temporary, as we wait for continued guidance from the CDC, OSHA, ADA, etc. This has been an opportunity to re-evaluate all the systems in our office and these changes are our “new normal”:

- **Advanced Staff Training** – While we completed our yearly OSHA training in February, each member of our team has completed additional awareness and prevention programs to enhance their knowledge and preparedness
- **Daily Health Checks of Our Team** – We are doing daily monitoring, including temperature checks, to provide safe dental care every individual day
- **Sequenced Patient Scheduling** – Our schedule will intentionally be schedule light for the upcoming weeks. We are allocating more time between patients to reduce traffic flow and allow more time for cleaning
- **Family Friendly Scheduling** – If you would like to reserve time for your family to come in as a group, we will do our best to accommodate that.
- **Enhanced Patient Screening & Office Protocols** – There is a list of the steps we are taking below. Please read them carefully before coming to our office
- **No Magazines/books/samples** – All these things have been eliminated to reduce cross contamination
- **Enhanced Personal Protection Equipment** – Gone are the days of us being stylish in the dental office. You may not even recognize us. In fact, we’ll be wearing so much extra stuff that we are going to have to keep the office slightly colder than usual. So, please plan accordingly
- **HEPA Air Filtration** – We have installed (5) Austin Air (made in the USA) HEPA air filtration systems, which filters the air every 3-5 minutes in the reception area and each of the treatment rooms. From Austin Air, “The HEPA technology used in our filters is clinically proven to remove 95% of all pollutants a small as 0.1 microns. The COVID-19 virus is larger than this, at 0.12 microns in size. So, we are confident our air purifiers are effectively removing the vast majority of virus when it is airborne”. And, it’s filtering everything else in the air

- **Advanced Chairside Suction** – The system we chose is called HealthyAir Source Capture Air Purification System. A long elephant-like tube is connected to a HEPA filtration system and placed just below the patient’s chin during aerosol-generating procedures. It’s unique 3-stage process of filtration results in a safer work and healthier breathing environment for all occupants. These are also used in some nail salons
- **TeleDentistry** – We will be doing more and more consultations and follow-up visits using a combination of phone, email, and video, via our secure patient communication system and other patient-friendly platforms

New Guidelines to Follow for Coming to Our Office

1. **Appointments** – Please do not just show-up at the office. You will be called to re-schedule any appointments that were scheduled between **March 16, 2020 – June 5, 2020**. We appreciate your patience as we work to recover our schedule. You can call us (978)465-5358 or email us info@dentalpartnersofnewburyport.com any time with any questions
2. **Pre-Appointment Screening** – You will need to complete a phone pre-appointment COVID-19 screening and review of medical history before your appointment date. One of our team members will be calling you
3. **Virtual Reception Room** – When you arrive at the office, please call us (978)465-5358. We will review a couple quick things with you and then text or call you when we are ready for you to come into the office. Please wear a face covering at all times, except during your appointment, obviously. Upon entering the office, one of our team members will take your temperature with a non-contact thermometer and spray your hands with liquid hand sanitizer. If we need you to wait at all, we will have you sit in one of the 3 seats in our reception area. These steps will be taken until guidelines have been updated by the powers that be. Anyone who has come to the appointment with you should wait in the car if possible. If not, they will need to go through the same screening process, temperature check, etc.
4. **Rinse** – You will be asked to rinse for 2-30 second rinses with a 1.5% hydrogen peroxide rinse
5. **Protective Glasses** – You will be asked to wear protective glasses for any procedure to protect your eyes.
6. **Hand Sanitizer** – Your dental assistant or hygienist will hand sanitize your hands before you leave the operatory
7. **Payment** – I think it goes without saying that small businesses like ours have been severely affected. We also know that many of you have been affected as well, and we don’t want that to get in the way of your dental care. We will continue to offer some in-house and 3rd party patient financing.

However, payment arrangements must be in place for all appointments. We have always required payment at the time of service and we must now follow our own guidelines more closely. Our goal is to eliminate transactions at the front desk as much as possible.

Our preference will be having a credit card on file in our secure network. That will be especially important for patients (children, young adults, etc.) who come alone and are not the responsible party. We will no longer be sending bills for a variety of reasons. We have a secure system in place to automatically bill your credit card at the intervals determined at the time your payment arrangements were made.

If you are paying by check, we ask that it is written out prior to your appointment. If for some reason the planned procedure becomes different, we will work with you on an individual basis to resolve that.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to us with any questions or concerns. Our office phone number is (978)465-5358. Erin's email is info@dentalpartnerspfnewburyport.com

Sincerely,

J Peter St Clair, DMD
E Charles Beliveau, DDS