

The global outbreak of Covid-19 has turned our world upside down. Although it's fair to say that we were unprepared for the effects of the virus, we have, nevertheless, had time to prepare for returning to some kind of normality.

The whole population is now far more aware of the importance of improved hygiene in daily life. Understandably, this will lead to increased concern about cross infection at a dental practice. While all dental practices routinely follow rigorous infection control procedures the coronavirus crisis has heightened awareness of the need for robust processes to ensure we do simple things well, to protect us all.

One thing we do know is that coronaviruses are of the enveloped type, this makes them susceptible to many commonly used disinfectants and this, at least, is good news. We utilise reliable decontamination equipment to ensure high standards of infection prevention and control. While the world is focusing on hand hygiene, we are focusing on the importance of surface cleaning and disinfection. With regards to surfaces within the practice, both cleaning and disinfection are required processes we undertake between every patient. We emphasise on the cleaning that must take place before disinfection to ensure bacteria, proteins and other contaminants are removed from surfaces before disinfection takes place.

We would like to assure all our patients that we are confidently ensuring that our practice is meeting our duty of care to implement effective disinfection measures minimising the risk of cross infection contamination.

You will probably notice a few new developments on your next visit. We made these changes to better protect you and our team from Covid-19.

- If you feel unwell or are self-isolating, please don't attend to your dental appointment but call us to inform the reception team.
- In order to help you comply with social distancing rules, we will have to book fewer patients each session. With this in mind, your attendance for dental appointments is even more important than before.
- Appointments will be scheduled such as to allow for mandatory disinfection times, which means that you may have to wait outside the practice until you are seen.
- We will provide hand sanitizer, which we recommend you use as soon as you come into the surgery and before leaving.
- During your first appointment, we will complete your examination and we'll deal with any emergencies you might have. As Aerosol Generating Procedures require special protection protocols in place, they will be provided in separate appointments.
- Due to the prolonged lockdown and the suspension of routine dental treatment you should be aware we are experiencing a very high demand for dental services and longer waiting lists. This will result in longer waiting times between successive visits or between your application and the actual appointment.

We look forward to seeing you soon and meanwhile remain available to answer any questions you may have about all the steps we are taking to ensure your safety. After this

period of lockdown and practice closure we look forward to being able to help you maintain your oral health once again.