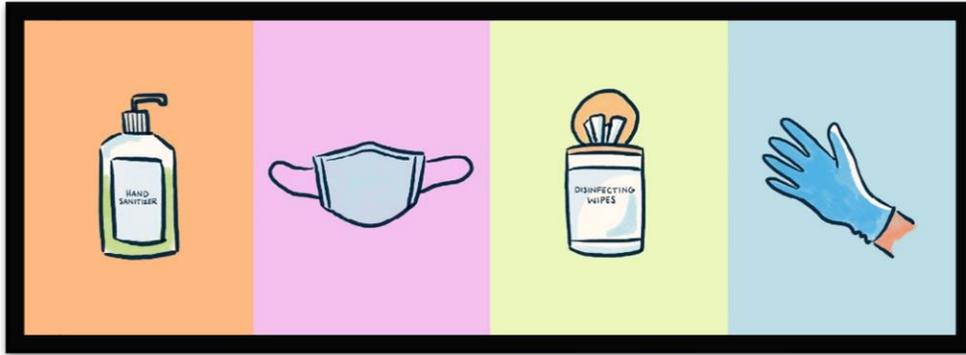


Safety Protocols During COVID-19



Dear Patient(s),

Many have expressed understandable concern during the current pandemic regarding patient safety from contamination / transmission while under our care. Of course, it must be said firstly that there are no guarantees. The nature of the virus remains unpredictable and the source of its transmission has not been solidified. Despite all our efforts, the decision to receive care must be made by each patient based on his or her comfort level with the acknowledgement of potential risk.

That being said, protecting our patients is our number one concern whether in times of a pandemic or not! All our regularly performed protocols are in place for the specific purpose of cleanliness and the prevention of disease / contamination. This means that the adjustment to COVID-19 protection measures has been easy for us, as we do the majority of the necessities already! Here are some of your most popular questions answered:

WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO MAKE THE ENVIRONMENT SAFE FOR PATIENTS?

- We will be taking temperatures at the doorway to ensure that no one with a temperature above 98.6 degrees is allowed admittance. This includes employees!
- All patients must wear a mask to gain admittance.
- Every patient must disclose unusual or COVID-19 related symptoms and sign an acknowledgement form.
- Patients must stay 6 feet apart in the waiting areas / hallways and only 2 families are allowed to sit in the waiting room at any given time.
- As per usual, all surgical and exam rooms are heavily cleaned and sterilized after any patient leaves it. This involves wiping down the surgical chair, counter, computer keyboards and mouse, tray stand, equipment, etc. All instruments are scrubbed, sterilized and run through the autoclave process after use.
- As per usual, employees are strategically and constantly washing their hands and sterilizing them and wearing gloves during any interaction with the patient's oral cavity.
- Employees wear masks all day every day when interacting with patients and remain 6 feet distant whenever possible / not engaging in surgery.



- Pens and clipboards are wiped down/sterilized throughout the day.
- Patient chairs in the waiting room are wiped down throughout the day.

WHY DON'T YOU WEAR FACE SHIELDS?

- Many consider face shields a necessity when it comes to the dental world, however, face shields do not offer protection against aerosols leaking in from the margins of the face shields. In fact, strong evidence is lacking in terms of the effectiveness of face shields against the transmission of viral respiratory diseases (The National Academy of Sciences, **2010**).
- Also, face shields might be subject to glare and fogging (Roberge, **2016**), making them a hindrance during lengthy surgeries wherein a doctor's unencumbered vision of the surgical site is absolutely necessary.
- For the above reasons and in compliance with the Ohio Health Department, face shields are not utilized in this office.



AM I SAFE AT YOUR OFFICE?

- Our facility is as safe as it possibly can be, but again, *there are no guarantees*. You could be infected by anyone or anything in between your commute from your home to our office, so the choice to proceed with your appointment is up to you. Our employees have been tested multiple times for the current virus and its antibodies, and no one has been positive. Eligible employees will also be electively undergoing the vaccination. This makes us “safe” but not foolproof. You must weigh your options and decide what you are comfortable doing.



I'M STILL NOT SURE WHETHER I SHOULD COME IN... WHAT SHOULD I DO?

- Stay home! If you have a concern regarding transmission, your safest recourse is to stay home. Only schedule an appointment if it is deemed an *emergency* – meaning you are in pain or suffering from an infection that may cause further complications if not treated. Do not put yourself at risk if it is not absolutely necessary, particularly if you are considered “high risk!”

