

 ***Can I put off my dental appointment until after the COVID-19 pandemic is over?*** Regular dental appointments are an important part of taking care of your overall health. While it can be tempting to put off your regular checkup until things feel more “normal” again, I advise against it. Routine appointments give me an opportunity to check for a number of health conditions and catch them early. Some conditions, such as tooth decay, can be more difficult, painful, and expensive to treat if they’re left undetected.

Your health and safety is, and has always been, my top priority. My staff and I are taking every precaution to limit the risk of COVID-19 transmission at your visit.

 ***What about tele-dentistry? Can I substitute a virtual visit for my regular appointment?*** A phone or video appointment isn’t the same as your regular appointment. Tele-dentistry can be helpful in some situations, such as deciding if an oral health issue you’re experiencing is an emergency that requires immediate treatment or if it’s something that can wait a bit. If you think you may be experiencing a dental emergency, call my office and we’ll help you decide if you need to come in. ***What are you doing differently because of COVID-19?*** There are a number of science-backed steps my staff and I are taking to help limit the spread of COVID-19. These include:

- **Increased personal protective equipment** including masks, face shields, goggles and surgical gowns or long-sleeved lab coats.
- **Increased cleaning protocols.** This includes using disinfectants known to kill the coronavirus that causes COVID-19, removing high-touch items like magazines and toys from waiting rooms and frequently cleaning items like pens and clipboards.
- **Asking you to change your behavior** by asking you to wait outside rather than in waiting rooms when possible, wearing face masks and not bringing additional people to your appointment.
- **Additionally:**
 - When you have parked and are ready for your appointment, call us at 501-664-3279 and wait in your car until we call you back.
 - Please wear your mask. If you do not have one, one will be provided to you at the door.
 - At the door, your temperature will be taken, hand sanitizer used, and a series of questions will be asked of you. You will then be taken directly to the treatment room, where you will rinse with a hydrogen peroxide/water rinse.
 - If you are a parent of a child below the age of 18, you may sit in the waiting room only, with your mask on. No one is allowed in the treatment rooms except the patients and staff.



I've heard it's safer to schedule your appointment for first thing in the morning — the office will be cleaner because there haven't been patients coming through before me. Is that true?



You should schedule your dental appointment for the time of day that works for you. The same enhanced cleaning protocols occur all day long, including leaving the room empty after a patient leaves to allow the appropriate time necessary as part of thoroughly cleaning and disinfecting the space between patients.



How is your dental team monitoring themselves for COVID-19?



Staff at our practice complete daily health screenings. This includes taking their temperatures to make sure they don't have a fever and asking them a series of health-related questions each day to make sure they're not experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19.



I see you added a charge related to COVID-19 to my bill. What's that for?



The safety of patients and dental staff is my highest priority. Because of the shortages in personal protective equipment (PPE), the cost of (PPE) has increased considerably. Our office is including this small charge during the pandemic until supply can meet demand and costs are controlled. If you have a dental benefit plan, it may cover some or all of these charges and the ADA has been advocating for payment from insurance companies across the country. However, the outcome is up to each plan.



You said you cannot see me as a patient because of my COVID-19 risk. Can you do that?



Yes. The safety of our patients and the dental team is our highest priority. As Dentists, we use our professional judgment and guidance from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and ADA to determine risk levels for seeing patients. If it was determined that you were high risk or had a high temperature on the day of your appointment, we can have a conversation about which factors determined delay of service, so that you can self-monitor and reschedule.