

OUR INFECTION CONTROL PROTOCOLS PROTECT YOU AND PROTECT OUR TEAM

Create a dedicated page on your website to your infection control protocol.

Include external links to the regulations you adhere to.

- The Dental Board of Australia’s Policies and Guidelines
- The Australian Dental Association’s Guidelines For Infection Control
- The National Health and Medical Research Council’s Australian Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Infection in Healthcare (2019)
- Standards Australia’s AS/NZS 4815, a Standard which specifies the requirements and practices necessary for the effective and safe reprocessing, storage, handling and transportation of reusable medical devices (RMDs) in human health care
- Workplace Health and Safety regulations

List examples of you have always done, such as:

- Implementation of good hand hygiene (including effective hand-washing) consistent with the national hand hygiene initiative from Hand Hygiene Australia (HHA)
- The use of personal protection equipment such as gloves, masks, eye protection and protective outerwear
- Safe handling and disposing of contaminated waste and sharps
- Effective cleaning of the treatment rooms before and after patient care, and of the practice generally
- Placement of environmental barriers, such as plastic coverings, on surfaces that are otherwise difficult to keep clean.

- Steam sterilisation (autoclaving) of instruments, and the accompanying testing, monitoring and maintenance of equipment to ensure the autoclave works properly at all times.
- Single-use items (for items which are difficult to decontaminate)
- Maintenance of clean waterlines, therefore protecting water quality
- Utilisation of handpieces with anti-retraction valves to reduce risk of transmission of pathogenic organisms
- Specific decontamination protocols related to specialised equipment and devices
- Specific decontamination procedures relating to dental impressions and devices that are worn in the mouth

Then, list the additional precautions that you are taking in light of the current situation with COVID-19.

1. Screening patients for travel and signs and symptoms of infection via SMS alert for every appointment. Patients with appointments who do have a mobile are being telephoned.
2. Taking temperature readings as part of their routine assessment of patients before performing dental procedures.
3. All patients are asked the following questions by the practitioner:
 - a. Have you had flu-like symptoms?
 - b. Have you travelled overseas over the past 21 days?
 - c. Have you been in contact with anyone who may be at risk of contracting or having the Coronavirus?
 - d. Have you experienced diarrhoea at all in the past 48 hours?
4. Making sure the personal protective equipment they use is appropriate for the procedures being performed.
5. Using a rubber dam when appropriate to decrease possible exposure to infectious agents.
6. Using high-speed evacuation for dental procedures producing an aerosol.
7. Having patients rinse with ozonated water before treatment.
8. Cleaning and disinfecting public areas frequently, including door handles, chairs and bathrooms. This is to occur after every patient.

9. Ensuring there is hand-sanitiser in the waiting room with a sign requesting patients' use.
10. Removal of non-essential items from the waiting room, being magazines, tea pot and cups, children's toys and books.
11. Not accepting walk-in patients. All appointments are to be arranged over the phone. (There is a sign posted on our front regarding this.)
12. Not accepting non-essential visitors to the practice such as dental reps. Couriers are accepted.
13. Notifying patients to avoid bringing additional people, such as children, partners, friends, to their appointments. (An email has been delivered to all patients with email addresses and a Facebook post detailing this has been pinned to our Facebook page.)
14. Require workers to practice good hygiene, including:
 - a. frequent hand washing
 - b. limiting contact with others, including through shaking hands, and
 - c. covering their mouths while coughing or sneezing
15. Avoid bringing in staff for non-essential meetings. Conduct them online or over telephone instead.
16. Restrict all non-essential travel on public transport and air-travel.
17. All staff to travel to and from work in their normal attire and only change into work clothes (pants and uniform) onsite. When taking work clothes home to launder, they are to be contained in a plastic bag.
18. Reception desk has disinfectant spray to regularly wipe over eftpos machine, telephone and surfaces.
19. All equipment that is designed for intra-oral use, such as the intra-oral camera and the x-ray film, are to be covered with a plastic barrier.
20. Welcome hugs and handshakes with team members and patients is now to be replaced with an elbow bump, nod of head or namaste bow.