



January 2021

Patient information regarding Dental Treatment During the COVID-19 / Corona Virus Pandemic

This information sheet is intended to provide some additional information and reassurance for you when you attend for your dental treatment. You will notice that some aspects of the practice that are slightly different to what you may normally expect and we hope that this information sheet helps to explain why we have taken the steps in order to protect you, and our staff, when attending for dental treatment.

How is my attendance at Surgery House different now?

In order to comply with the UK Governments continued advice on social distancing we are limiting the number of patients that come into the surgery at any one time. This may mean that we will ask you to remain in your car in the car park before the scheduled appointment in order to prevent patients having to wait for a protracted period of time within the waiting room. We are also asking patients to attend alone wherever possible to minimise the number of people in the practice environment. We will need ask you some specific questions about possible COVID infection before you attend the surgery just so we can ensure a safe clinical environment.

You will notice that the waiting room has changed and that we have installed clear screens at the reception desk. This is not intended to be impersonal but just helps to provide a further protective barrier for our reception staff. On arrival we will also ask you to undertake a modified medical questionnaire in order to assess your potential risk of coronavirus infection. We will be doing this for all of our patients and our staff and while this extra step is unusual for all of us this screening process is part of the best practice guidelines from the Department of Health, Public Health England and the current NHS guidance. In the event that any of our patients are clinically unwell, have a significantly elevated temperature, or have been in close contact with any known COVID-19 patient we will politely request that they return home to self-isolate and will not be able to enter the surgery for treatment.

What additional steps have we taken to protect staff and patients?

Our normal universal cross-infection control protocols at Surgery House remain in place in order to maximise the safety of our staff and to our patients. The dental surgery setting is already a very clean environment with high levels of cross infection control compared to most public areas. While is not possible for us to control sources of infection outside the dental practice we have introduced the following additional safeguards since June 2020 as a result of the Covid-19 / Corona Virus Pandemic outbreak which I hope also to reassure you regarding the safety of our clinical dental environment:

- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

All of our staff have additional PPE in order to minimise and reduce the risk of cross infection. These include the highest recommended mask filters (FFP2 and FFP3 masks which filter 97-99% of all air) and enhanced face visors. We may also wear gowns or aprons during some dental procedures. We may look different because of this equipment but please be assured it is worn in order to protect patients and staff as part of the current guidelines.

- **Staff testing**

All of the staff at Surgery House are tested on a weekly basis for Covid-19.

- Use of Hand Sanitiser on arrival and exit**
We will request that you utilise our hand sanitiser on arrival and departure from the practice to further optimise hand hygiene in and around Surgery House.
- Maintenance of Social distancing in waiting area**
We are restricting the number of patients in the waiting room at this time in order to comply with the current guidance on social distancing. You will also notice that there is no reading material in the waiting area, for which we apologise, but this is also recommended as part of the current national guidance for medical and dental practices.
- Longer appointment times**
We have increased the timings of some of our appointments for particular treatments. This has been undertaken to provide additional time for surgery cleaning and disinfection between patients as well as to also minimise the crossover time between patient appointments.
- Air Filtration Purification System**
As a result of the current pandemic we have installed medical grade filtration units in all surgeries and the waiting room/ reception area in order to optimise air exchange and to filter the air within the clinical areas. This allows us to ensure complete air exchange with anti-bacterial and anti-viral filters in all of our surgeries between patient visits in order to further safeguard both staff and patients. You may also notice air monitors in our surgeries which also allow us to monitor air quality before, during and after appointments.
- Use of an antiseptic mouthwash for both patients and staff before some procedures**
For some dental procedures we may ask you to undertake a mouth rinse prior to dental treatment as an additional measure. Our staff will also be undertaking the same mouthwash before some dental treatments to further reduce the potential risks to them.
- Use of dental dam during some dental procedures**
The use of dental dam for some fillings and root fillings may be increased as this helps to reduce the aerosol that can be generated when we are working within the mouth. Many patients will already be used to having dental dam in place for some treatments but for some this may be a new procedure and will be explained to you in the surgery.

What if I have a dental problem and need advice or emergency treatment?

We continue to provide a normal emergency service during normal surgery hours and we also continue to have an on-call service at evenings and weekends as we have always done (this is available 365 days per year). For patients who need urgent dental advice and who cannot attend the practice in person we will continue to provide telephone and video consultations wherever needed. Emergency appointments during working hours as well as out of hours can be accessed by calling or emailing the practice on 01252-873074 or by emailing us on:

surgeryhouse@btconnect.com

Thank you for your understanding at this time and as soon as we can safely return to our usual practices we will do so.