



Safety Measures in our Practice

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1 Training and Educating Our Team

One of the most important things we are doing during this time is training and educating our staff.

- Our team has had a refresher in proper handwashing techniques. This may seem basic; however, it is the most important thing to do to help prevent the spread of disease. Consequently, we have spent a decent amount of time ensuring that our team does it well and often, especially before and after every patient.
- Before caring for a patient, they have practiced the appropriate use of personal protective equipment (PPE) to prevent contamination.
- If one of our staff members is not feeling well, we encourage them to stay home for two weeks. We have a backup team if someone is ill.
- Everyone in the office will take their temperature at the beginning of every day. If any member has an elevated temperature of **100.2 F and above**, we will immediately send that individual home.
- The number of staff providing their care for patients will be limited to facilitate social distancing within the office and among team members
- A checklist of recommendations has been created for our team to follow so that they arrive to work healthy and go home to their families without worry. The specific list has been provided below.





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2 Recommendations to Our Team

Before coming to work:

- Take your temperature. Do not go to work if you or anyone in your family are experiencing symptoms such as coughing, sore throat, and fever.
- Leave your jewelry at home. This included watches, rings, and earrings.
- Tie your hair up and keep your nails short.
- Avoid extra accessories.
- Place your phone in a disposable bag such as a Ziplock bag. Discard the bag (or Ziplock bag) at the end of the day.
- If you are bringing a lunch, bring it in a disposable container or wrapping.





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At work:

- Change into scrubs and work shoes (preferably plastic and wipeable) as soon as you arrive.
- Use PPE as appropriate.
- Leave all clutter (pens, phones, etc.) outside of patient rooms.
- We discourage workers from using other workers' phones, desks, offices, and other work tools and equipment when possible.
- Clean phone handset after use.
- Discourage cell phone use at work.



After Work:

- Do not touch anything (including loved ones).
- Remove clothes and shoes.
- Wash clothes in the washing machine with hot water and detergent.
- Shower immediately with soap and water before touching anything.





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3 Patient Interview and Social Distancing

Before patients arrive, every effort is made to:

- During the process of scheduling an appointment, use the established and recommended screening checklists and scripts.
- To recognize potential carriers, prepare scripts and questions.
- If the patient shows any signs of a cough, fever, or describes having any concerning warning signs, reschedule the patient.
- Tell patients to call ahead and reschedule their appointment if they develop symptoms such as a cough, sore throat, fever, or respiratory infection on the day they are scheduled to be seen.





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To promote social distancing:

- We are spreading out the appointments so there are fewer people in the waiting room. There will be a maximum of two people at a time.
- If a patient is being accompanied, their escort should wait in the car to limit the number of people in the waiting room and promote social distancing.
- We encourage patients to wait in their cars and call the office when they have arrived. Patients can also opt to wait outside the office. When it is time to be treated, they can be contacted by phone.

Safety measures that will be taken upon arrival:

- To avoid contact with the door handles, leave the office door open.
- Posters and signs will be at the entrance door advising patients not to enter the facility when ill and regarding risks of COVID-19.
- Supplies such as alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) with 60-95% alcohol will be provided at the entrance, in waiting rooms, and at the front desk.
- Posters will be at the entrance and in the waiting room to provide patients and Health Care Personnel (HCP) with instructions about hand hygiene and cough etiquette.
 - how and when to perform hand hygiene
 - how to use tissues or elbows to cover nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing
 - how to dispose of tissues and contaminated items in the trash.

ALL these measures can help prevent transmission to others.





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4 Measures Upon Arrival

Patients are:

- Immediately directed to a handwashing station
- Asked to rinse with 1% hydrogen peroxide before each appointment
- Guided into an examination room as quickly as possible upon arrival to avoid more than two patients in the waiting room.
- Patients will be asked about any present symptoms of a respiratory infection, history of any traveling, and possible contact with COVID-19.
- Assessed for respiratory symptoms and fever. Temperatures will be taken with a non-contact digital infrared forehead thermometer. Patients will be asked to sign a health declaration form.
- If fever temperature is 100.2 degrees F or higher or respiratory symptoms are present, patients will be advised to seek medical treatment and their visit will be rescheduled.



5 Measures Taken Upon Patient Entry to the Clinic

- If an examination room is not available, ensure social distancing in the waiting room by placing seating a minimum of 6 feet apart.
- Remove anything that is not easily disinfected and clutter from the waiting room. This includes magazines, area rugs, pillows, toys, etc.
- Frequently wipe down the waiting room, door handles, bathrooms, light switches, desks, computers, etc.





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6 Reception Room and Front Desk Safety Measures

- Physical barriers or partitions (e.g., glass or plastic windows) will be installed if possible, at reception areas to limit close contact between reception and potentially infectious patients.
- Headsets are encouraged to be used, so hands are free and only one person uses it.
- Have air-handling systems with appropriate filtration in the office.

7 Protocols of the Clinical Team

We will continue to take precautions in the operatory rooms but with more attention to detail to ensure that procedures are followed consistently and correctly.

In addition, an assistant will focus only on sterilization. This team member will be responsible for disinfecting, sterilizing, and cleaning everything in the operatory room. The waiting room will also be disinfected.



Hand Hygiene is performed by our staff:

- Before and after all patient contact
- Before putting on and after removing PPE.
- Washing hands with water and soap for at least 30 seconds.





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Personal Protective Equipment:

- Staff must wear their PPE which includes a mask, cap, gloves, eye protection, gown, and face shield.
- Masks are a one-time use
- N95 respirators should be used instead of a facemask when performing or present for an aerosol-generating procedure.

Eye Protection:

- Protect your eyes by using goggles or a disposable face shield that covers the front and sides of one's face.
- Remove eye protection before leaving the patient room or care area.
- Reusable eye protection must be disinfected and cleaned according to the manufacturer's reprocessing instructions before re-use.
- Disposable eye protection should be discarded after use.

Gloves:

- Upon entering the patient's room, put on clean (non-sterile) gloves.
- If the gloves are torn or heavily contaminated, change the gloves.
- After leaving the patient's room, remove gloves and discard them. Wash your hands immediately.





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Gowns:

- Before entering the operatory room, put on a clean isolation gown.
- Remove and discard the gown in a container for waste or linen before leaving the patient room or care area. Cloth gowns should be laundered after each use; disposable gowns should be discarded.
- Gowns are prioritized for all aerosol-generating procedures. For example, procedures where splashes and sprays are anticipated.

8 Patients in the Operatory

- The health care personnel (HCP) should strictly follow basic infection control practices between patients like:
 - hand hygiene
 - cleaning
 - disinfecting shared equipment
- Limit the transport and movement of the patient outside of the room
- X-ray equipment should be in the patient's operatories to reduce the need for patient transport.
- No other team member should be coming in during a procedure.
- The entry and exit should be minimized.
- HCP should stop oneself from entering the operatory room until sufficient time has passed to remove potentially infectious particles.





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- The room should undergo appropriate cleaning and surface disinfection before it is returned to routine use
- Special precautions will be taken when performing Aerosol Generating procedures (AGP)
- Procedures that are likely to induce coughing will be avoided if possible.

9 Protocols After the Clinical Treatment

- All non-disposable medical equipment used for patient care should be cleaned and disinfected according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Ensure that environmental cleaning and disinfection procedures are followed regularly and correctly.
- Routine cleaning and disinfection procedures on frequently touched surfaces or objects by are appropriate in healthcare settings, including those patient-care areas in which aerosol-generating procedures are performed.

At the End of the Day:

- A special cleaning crew cleans and disinfects the office from top to bottom in preparation for the following day

By following these guidelines, we are confident that it will help create a safe environment for everyone. We hope that you can feel secure knowing that we are doing everything in our power to provide the safest clinical conditions to protect our patients, team, and families.

