

Standard Operating Procedures

Clinical Safety Procedure #69 – Mitigation of aerosol exposure during the COVID-19 pandemic	
Date Implemented: 5/29/20	Revision Date:

A. Purpose

SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, is thought to be spread primarily through respiratory droplets. Many dental procedures require the use of handpieces, including hygiene handpieces, or ultrasonic/power scalers and air-water syringes. These instruments create a visible spray that contain large particle droplets of water, saliva, blood, microorganisms, and other debris.

B. Scope

During the COVID-19 pandemic, clinicians will use their professional judgment to determine the necessity for the use aerosol-generating instruments. The administrative and engineering controls, work practices and PPE outlined will be followed:

- Operatories are set up with only essential equipment, instruments, and supplies for the procedure being performed. All other instruments and supplies will be stored in closed containers, drawers or cabinets. All ancillary items (i.e. personal items, sample products, displays, etc.) will be removed from operatory or stored in closed containers, drawers or cabinets.
- Avoid aerosol-generating procedures whenever possible.
- If aerosol-generating procedures are necessary, use high volume evacuation to minimize droplet spatter and aerosols. Consider the use of dental dam and four-handed dentistry when feasible.
- Preprocedural mouth rinses with an antimicrobial product (chlorhexidine gluconate, essential oils, povidone-iodine or cetlpyridinium chloride) may reduce the level of oral microorganisms in the aerosols and spatter generated during dental procedures. A rinse of 1-1.5% hydrogen peroxide is also an option.
- Use a portable air filtration unit. Position the unit in the vicinity of the patient chair, toward the patient's feet. The clinician(s) should not be between the patient's mouth and the air filtration unit.
- A N95 respirator is available to consider for use with a face shield or goggles for aerosol-generating procedures. If used, N95 respirators will be used in accordance with Clinical Safety Procedure #68 – Use of N95

Standard Operating Procedures

respirator. If a N95 respirator is not used, a surgical mask and face shield are required.

- Allow at least 15 minutes after the completion of a procedure and patient departure to begin operatory cleaning and disinfection procedures.

C. Responsibility/Affected Employees

Dentists, Dental Assistants, Dental Hygienists

D. Personal Protective Equipment

N95 respirator, surgical mask, face shield, goggles

E. Definitions & Abbreviations

F. Resources

CDC Guidance for Dental Settings – Interim Infection Prevention and Control
Guidance for Dental Setting During the COVID-19 Response

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/dental-settings.html>

ADA Return to Work Interim Guidance Toolkit