

31

Reopening  
information for  
patients

**ROD MCNEIL**  
& ASSOCIATES

4<sup>th</sup> June 2020

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## Post Covid-19 Reopening Policy

This policy has been informed by multiple updated sources from within the dental and medical professions and the government.

It outlines modifications to our normal procedures that we are adopting now the practice is reopening.

It is not known at this time whether these procedures are temporary or whether they will become a permanent feature of the way dental practices must be run to ensure patient and staff safety in the future.

The worldwide COVID-19 pandemic is still being evaluated and studied. Policies and recommendations are likely to change in line with new scientific evidence over time.

We would like to thank you for your understanding and forbearance during the period of temporary practice closure and for your cooperation whilst we implement new measures at the practice.

We will of course be providing dental care to all of you in the safest possible environment. We greatly appreciate your assistance with any new or modified procedures at the practice.

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## Provisional Timetable

The practice will re-open and we will be making appointments for patients who require emergency dental treatment from Monday 8th June 2020. The appointment will be used to assess treatment needs in line with currently regulatory restrictions.

We hope to be extending our opening to other patient groups from July. We will prioritise those patients with treatment that was not completed prior to lockdown.

Our intention is to reintroduce Hygienist services from early July. This allows us time to settle in to our new protocols, which we have introduced for the safety of both you and us.

# 31

## Essential Communication Before Your Appointment

- When we make your appointment, we will email a confirmation and request that you update the attached medical history form.
- The form will include a new section which will allow us to assess your level of risk for coronavirus infection before you attend the surgery.
- These forms will be sent in electronic format and need to be completed before your arrival at 31 Harley Street.
- If you are unable to complete the forms, please contact our reception prior to your arrival at least the day before. We are here to help.

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## New Measures to Reduce the risk of Covid-19 transmission

We want to reassure you that at 31 Harley Street, our normal cross-infection control protocols have been approved to the highest standard by Care Quality Commission (CQC) last year. These protocols cover all previously known pathogens and are already woven into all clinical activity carried out at the practice.

We know that a dental practice is already a very clean environment compared to public areas and there is no evidence of COVID-19 transmission occurring in increased rates in dentists or their staff.

We have collectively evaluated all of the updated guidance and observed what measures have been put in place in other countries. We feel that the measures which are outlined in this policy vastly reduce risk.

Please be assured that all of our clinical staff will also be complying with our updated procedures to reduce the risk of cross infection in both directions.

## Before Attending the Practice

We will carry out a pre-attendance assessment via your completed Medical History before your appointment and, if necessary, a follow-up telephone conversation to assess relative coronavirus infection risk.

Reception will contact you to remind you of this if we have not received your completed forms. If you have any difficulties with completing the forms we can help you with this over the phone.

We may also carry out a video or phone consultation with you to assess your dental problem prior to your visit.

If we feel that you are at risk of having been infected, even if you are asymptomatic, we will respectfully request for you to delay booking any appointments with us for 2 weeks.

If we do not receive the completed questionnaire in time and we are unable to contact you, we may need to cancel your appointment. In order for us to use our clinical time effectively to care for patients, you may be charged for the appointment if we are unable to fill it at short notice, as per our normal terms and conditions.

We recommend that patients in the high-risk groups for developing complications from coronavirus delay non-essential dental treatment for as long as possible until the trend of the pandemic becomes clear. If you are in a high risk group and do require urgent treatment, we have arranged specific times in the diary to accommodate this.

We will be operating contactless payment systems going forward to reduce your time at reception. There will be several options available and you are welcome to discuss these with reception on the phone before your appointment.

This allows us to adopt a 'one way system' of patient flow and reduces the requirement for unnecessary contact at reception.

We are changing our opening times so you and our staff are able to avoid rush hour.

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# 31

## Arriving at the practice

We are adopting a 'one way system' for arrival and departure. Please arrive on time and call reception to notify us of your arrival. You will then receive a call back for when you are able to enter the building. We intend to eliminate waiting inside the practice and at reception.

Appointments will be staggered so that patients do not arrive or leave at the same time as other patients.

You will be welcomed at the front door, where we will take your temperature with a no-touch thermometer and provide a mask. There will also be a hand sanitiser station for your use.

If your temperature is above 37.8°C, you will be unable to enter the practice and will be asked to return home and self-isolate as per current government guidelines.

We will ask for you to hang your coat or jacket on the coat rack. The front door will remain locked, however we cannot accept liability for personal items so please limit what you bring into the building.

We will direct you straight to the surgery and request that you do the following:

- Thoroughly wash your hands for 30 seconds with the antiseptic hand wash provided in the surgery
- When you are in the chair, we will request that you wash your mouth with a special virucidal mouthwash
- Avoid use of the spittoon. There will be a new device for you to use instead.

We will be asking patients to avoid using our cloakroom wherever possible; but if you do use it, please do your best to ensure that you leave the facilities as you would expect to find them and wash your hand thoroughly. The cloakroom will be regularly disinfected between patients.

One adult is able to attend with a child or a carer; please do not bring additional family members with you unless they are happy to wait outside the practice.

## Practice Procedures

We have spent time critically looking at every aspect of the practice with a view to removing all non-essential items that can potentially be a cause of infection.

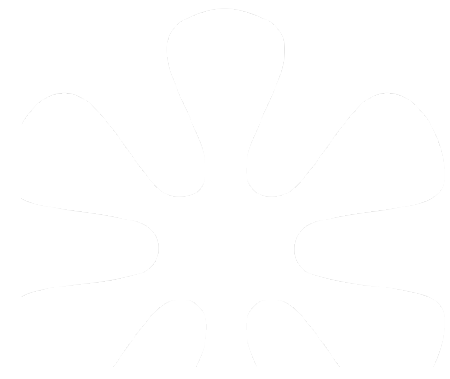
You will find that the practice looks and feels different when you attend.

All clinical and common areas including door handles and surfaces will be cleaned regularly and disinfected in addition to our normal surface cleaning protocols between patients.

We will be providing a 'buffer' period between patients to allow additional time for the new decontamination procedures we have implemented, allow for any treatment overruns and allow preparation time for the next patient so that they do not need to wait in the reception area.

For now, all future appointments will be made and confirmed by email or telephone to limit your time spent at reception.

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## Dental Procedures

All staff will be using personal protective equipment (PPE) in line with current recommendations and evidence.

We will look very different. Whilst our masks may make us appear impersonal and distant, please be assured we are still the same friendly team underneath it all!

We apologise in advance for the necessary reduction in social interaction that this will necessitate.

We are especially mindful that many dental treatments are aerosol-generating procedures (AGP's).

It is difficult for us to carry out some dental procedures without generation of some level of aerosol.

Aerosol suspended in the air is a theoretical source of infection which we obviously wish to keep to a minimum. Currently the dental literature suggests:

- Our use of our normal high-volume suction reduces aerosol production by over 90%.

- The use of dental rubber dam where possible reduces bio aerosols by a further 30 to 90%

- Our regular surgical facemasks filter approximately 60% of remaining airborne particles.

- FFP2 and FFP3 masks filter 94% and 99% respectively of airborne particles in both directions (patient to clinician and clinician to patient).

- Each surgery has been equipped with a specialised air filter system which neutralises 99.9% of viruses in a single air pass.

We therefore feel that our normal dental procedures can be carried out with minimal risk by the use of high-volume suction, rubber dam, masks (surgical, FFP2 and FFP3) and air filtration. Remember that what makes us safe, makes you safe.

Despite the financial impact of the coronavirus, Rod McNeil & Associates will not be increasing its normal fees. However, we will have a set 'PPE fee' for each appointment. The time taken to carry out treatment sessions may also need to be extended.

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## A Quick Summary

- Prior to your appointment we require you to allow us to assess your level of risk for coronavirus infection before you attend the surgery.
- We are confident that we are able to provide dental care for you in as normal an environment as possible, while bearing in mind our responsibilities to mitigate risks of infection spread as far as is practically possible.
- This policy will be constantly reviewed and updated as necessitated by the evidence and regulation over time.
- If you have any questions regarding this guidance or about your dental care at 31 Harley Street please do not hesitate to contact us on [info@rodmcneil.co.uk](mailto:info@rodmcneil.co.uk) or call us on 0207 629 7061.
- We have missed you and we look forward to welcoming you back to 31 Harley Street.