

March 30, 2020

BC Association of Oral & Maxillofacial Surgeons (BCAOMS)

Recommendations for Emergency Dental Care during COVID-19 Pandemic

The document is intended to assist the dentist in screening and managing patients during this crisis. It is also intended to reduce community exposure and to keep the Public and dental community safe. New information is emerging rapidly in relation to this pandemic, and these recommendations will change as we learn more.

Definitions:

1. Emergency Care

- **Infection:**
 - Cellulitis or diffuse swelling with intra- or extra-oral which may compromise the airway
 - Uncontrolled infection
- **Trauma:**
 - Fracture of facial bones which may compromise the airway
- **Bleeding:**
 - Uncontrolled hemorrhage
- **Pain:**
 - Uncontrolled severe pain

2. Urgent Care

- **Infection:**
 - Severe pericoronitis
 - Alveolar osteitis
 - Abscess with localized pain and swelling
- **Trauma:**
 - Tooth fracture causing pain or soft tissue trauma
 - Dentoalveolar trauma with avulsion/luxation of teeth
- **Medical concerns:**
 - Dental treatment required prior to critical medical procedures

Personal Protective Equipment:

- Patients should wear a face mask at all times apart from examination and treatment
- Patients should be isolated to a treatment room
- Social distancing of 2 meters

Personal Protective Equipment:

- Gloves – avoid touching multiple surfaces
- Gowns and/or surgical suits with head covers – should be disposable, one time use items
- Face mask, shield, or goggles – should be used to prevent droplets, and/or aerosols from contacting your mouth, nose and eyes
- Non-aerosol generating procedures may occur with surgical masks, however, a fitted N95 mask with normal PPE is preferred.
- Aerosol-generating procedures (the use of handpieces, air/water syringes, and suction) require a fitted N95 mask with normal PPE.
- Droplets can be created anytime a patient talks, coughs or sneezes. Thus, at any given time, regardless of procedure type, one must assume droplets are present. Emerging evidence also suggests that some patients fail to show symptoms for 2-4 days after becoming infected; one should err on the side of caution and wear the proper PPE.
- N95 masks or equivalent mask types require proper certified fitting to obtain at best 95-98% filtration of particles.

Additional Resources, Links, and Locations of Centres for Emergency Dental Care:

BCAOMS website in development

Phone Call

Referral

In-Office Visit

Does the patient have a dental emergency or urgent dental problem?

No → Re-Schedule Patient

Yes

Is the patient COVID-19 Positive?
or
Does the patient or accompanying person have risks factors for COVID-19?
- Symptoms of respiratory infection: cough, difficulty breathing, fever >37.5°C
- Close contact with person(s) with diagnosed COVID-19
- Travel in past 14 days

Yes →

Advise patient to seek medical attention:
- Family physician
- Public health department (call 811)
- www.HealthLinkBC.ca
- Hospital ER (phone ahead)

*Re-assess when patient has recovered and/or tests negative for COVID-19

Phone Consultation

No

Phone Consultation

Do you believe the situation requires an in-person assessment or treatment?

No →

Delay dental treatment: consider antibiotics, analgesics, chlorhexidine
Re-assess at an appropriate interval

Yes

Consult and/or referral to regional Centre for Emergency Dental Care (CEDC)

Does the patient or accompanying person have risks factors for COVID-19?
- Symptoms of respiratory infection: cough, difficulty breathing, fever >37.5°C
- Close contact with person(s) with diagnosed COVID-19
- Travel in past 14 days
- Pre-op COVID-19 testing if available

Risk Factors Present or Positive COVID-19 test

No

Surgical Facility / Dental Office

Check the temperature of patient and accompanying person(s)

> 37.5°C

Is the fever suspected to be the result of an odontogenic infection?

< 37.5°C

Vital signs, clinical examination and radiographs as needed

Yes

No

Emergency Treatment:
- Extraction
- Root canal therapy
- Incision and drainage
- Repair of dento-alveolar injury
- Control of bleeding with local measures, cautery, etc.

Refer to hospital for complex treatment
Call ahead if you do not have hospital privileges

Infection Control and Prevention:

- Patient should wear a face mask at all times apart from examination and treatment
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Personal Protective Equipment:

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