

West Calgary Dental Group Patient Update. 8 August 2020

We are grateful to our patients for their continued support as they help us maintain a strict COVID control protocol within our dental office while continuing with office hours. Similarly, our staff deserve a big thank-you for their hard work and effort to daily prepare the clinic amidst these circumstances.

Please know that our team is committed to a clinic standard that is unlike many dental offices. This is very important to us as it follows AHS and exceeds dental association guidelines. We use advanced PPE that includes a cap or bouffant, full gown, face-shield, individual eyewear, gloves and double-mask (level III layered over N95) that is **one-use only for one patient visit**, when treatment is provided. This is very costly and time consuming. It is particularly difficult to communicate behind the layers.

We operate in enclosed rooms with known air-recirculation values and HEPA filtration units. We allow aerosol capture and settling before room cleaning and preparation for re-use. The room is timed-out and unavailable for some time when following aerosol-generating procedures. Our professional cleaning staff are on-site every day and intensify the daily disinfection cycle.

Patient cooperation with arrival, masking and pre-screening protocols has gone well. However, any procedures we have do not totally eliminate the possibility that an asymptomatic patient could one day come through the facility and later inform us that, by chance, they tested positive to COVID-19 from an outside source (which is their duty inside of 14 days from any office visit). This could lead to some significant schedule interruptions and delays. Similarly, please remember to come to your scheduled appointment or give us 48hrs advanced notice, since other patients surely need the appointment as well.

While we work in challenging proximity to COVID, our wall of defence is based on pre-treatment screening, advanced PPE and strict facility control. Our patient management and in-house workflow aims to eliminate any potential spread by an asymptomatic carrier of any infection—safely and systematically.

As most of our current patients are aware, we have been pleased to have tracked both below and on target with a suggested Alberta Dental fee guide for the past decade. Unfortunately, we are just not able to sustain this and have made the difficult decision to increase our fees. Meanwhile, we 1) relentlessly advocate for patient benefits and insurance 2) take assignment 3) work to promote increases in coverage and 4) provided estimates pre-treatment. It is our hope that insurance companies would quickly increase their benefit levels. Similarly, patients are encouraged to contact their insurers and employers and request similar.

Please know that our team is here to help. We sincerely appreciate your understanding during this time.

Respectfully submitted,

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