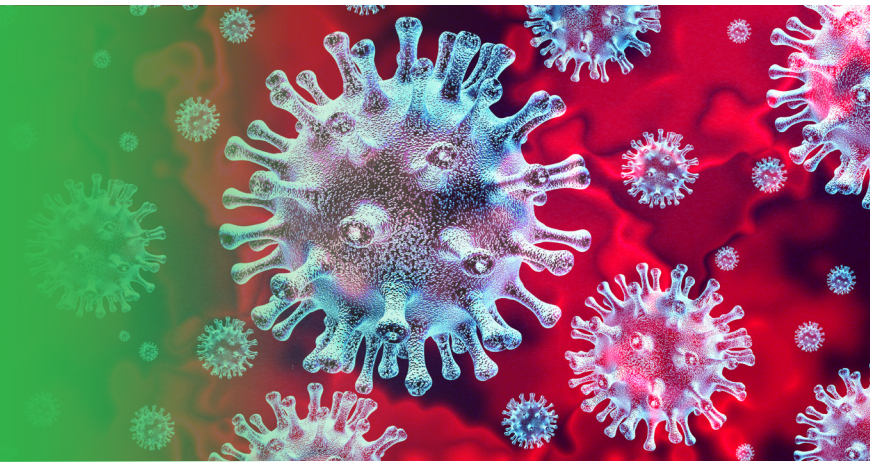
DELTA DENTAL®

Prioritizing Your Oral Health During the Coronavirus Pandemic

The coronavirus continues to spread, and it's more important than ever to practice good oral and overall health routines, and to re-evaluate basic activities like a trip to the dental office.



Oral and overall health are connected! Your mouth helps you to eat, drink, talk and smile, but health conditions like diabetes, heart or kidney disease, and many more can all affect our oral health. And individuals with those health conditions, plus older adults and those with weakened immune systems, are at higher risk for coronavirus.

Help keep your smile healthy and reduce your risk of coronavirus with a good home health routine.

- Brush your teeth twice a day for two minutes each time with a fluoridated toothpaste.
- Floss once a day.
- Eat a balanced diet.
- Exercise—even quick walks around your neighborhood or home have great benefits.
- Wash your hands often, especially before eating or brushing your teeth. You should wash with soap and water for at least 20 seconds each time.

Talk to your dentist about upcoming appointments.

Federal, state and local governments and health care organizations are taking actions to prevent coronavirus infection and save lives.

We strongly encourage you to follow American Dental Association (ADA) and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines and delay any preventive or elective dental treatment at this time. However, only you and your dentist know what can be postponed due to individual health needs.

If you do need dental treatment, you should know that dentists already follow strict infection control guidelines that can help prevent the spread of many infections, including the coronavirus. Dentists and staff change gloves and masks between each patient, frequently wash their hands, sterilize dental tools and clean surfaces with hospital-grade disinfectants.

OVER ▸

If you believe you have an urgent dental need or dental emergency, contact your dentist immediately.

- If your dentist has elected to close at this time, an answering service can often relay messages to your dentist, who can provide next steps. Many dentists will also make themselves available for dental emergencies.
- Without immediate dental consultation, only you can decide if your condition requires a visit to the emergency department. But, here are guidelines that may help:
    - If you have swelling of the face, throat or mouth, along with difficulty breathing, swallowing or a fever of 100 degrees or higher, seek immediate attention at the nearest emergency room.
    - If you can't contact your dentist and have severe dental pain or bleeding in the mouth that won't stop, seek immediate care at an emergency room.
- If you visit the emergency room for a dental issue, follow up with your dentist as soon as possible after the emergency visit for continued care.
    - Medical traumas such as broken teeth can only be dealt with by a dentist, whereas severe trauma related to an accident will require an oral surgeon and/or other trauma specialists followed by restorative dental care.
    - In general, unless a hospital has dentists or oral surgeons on staff, they can only prescribe medications.

The takeaways:

- Follow all ADA, CDC and federal, state and local guidelines first.
- Trust your dentist in their knowledge of infection prevention and the priority of patient needs.

During this uncertain and unprecedented time, Delta Dental's first priority continues to be the health and safety of our customers, members, dentists, employees and the communities we serve. We are committed to working together as a community to support one another and successfully get past this challenging time.