

## BACK TO ROUTINE DENTAL CARE

### *Feeling safe at the dentist office*

Take comfort in knowing that when you go to the dentist, you're in expert hands. Dental offices have been protecting patients from diseases since long before the pandemic started.

The dentist's office is a safe, clean place. Dental staff are trained in infection control and equipped to help prevent COVID-19 from spreading. They already follow CDC guidelines and have established routines for how they clean before and after each appointment. They're fully prepared to take good care of patients.

### **What to expect during your visit**

While the details may vary from office to office, things will be a little different when you get there. Overall, you'll notice lots of extra safety measures in place.

Some offices may check your temperature first. You'll spend less time, if any, in the waiting room. You might even have a virtual waiting room. In the normal waiting room, magazines will probably be gone and chairs will be socially distanced. You'll also have to wear a mask before and after your treatment.

On top of strict disinfecting processes, dentists and hygienists will likely wear extra personal protective equipment (PPE) such as respirators, face shields and caps. Even you may be given PPE, such as a gown and goggles.

Some dental hygiene procedures may be different, too. The dental hygienist might skip polishing your teeth and use a hand tool instead of a water-powered tool to reduce spray droplets. During deeper cleanings, they might use other barriers to reduce spray.



### **Screening for symptoms before you go**

Ahead of your appointment, you might get a call asking whether you've had a fever or show other signs of COVID-19. Some offices may ask you to get tested for COVID-19 beforehand. If you have symptoms, or have been around people with COVID-19 or symptoms, be honest. Ask whether your visit should be postponed.

### **Prioritize your dental health, even when things are stressful**

The mouth is a big part of the body and regular dentist visits are important to your overall health. So, make sure to keep up with brushing, flossing and rinsing in between visits.