

COVID-19 Enhanced Safety Protocols

We have always complied with OSHA-mandated protocols to maintain a highly sterile environment within our oral surgery office. These guidelines were created to safeguard against the spread of severely contagious diseases, such as tuberculosis and measles, and they are equally effective in managing the spread of influenza and coronavirus. In response to the current pandemic, we have augmented our safety protocols across a number of areas, including:

- Employee Health Screening
- Patient Health Screening
- Office Social Distancing
- Common Area Sterilization
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Treatment Area Protection

The safety of our patients and staff is our highest priority. The added protections described below have been vetted with representatives from the CDC, American Dental Association, New Jersey Dental Association and global experts from across Asia and Europe, and we are pleased that a majority of patients report being very confident that we are taking all necessary steps to ensure their safety.

Enhanced Safety Protocols as of March 27, 2020 and updated on May 12, 2020:

1. Employees are regularly screened for COVID-19 risk factors with temperature checks daily. Those who report illness/travel and those at risk for COVID-19 are required to self-quarantine for 14 days prior to returning to work. At this time, asymptomatic employees with no risk factors are not being routinely tested for COVID-19 as the CDC does not recommend it.
2. Patients are screened for COVID-19 risk factors and pre-existing conditions when scheduling their appointments and again upon arrival. All patients will be asked to reschedule if risk factors are present. For patients who report a history of being COVID positive, they must provide evidence that they have no active virus through 2 consecutive tests given at least 24 hours apart and no symptoms or with antibody testing and no symptoms prior to being allowed to receive care.
3. Patient temperatures are taken at check-in as a further screening precaution, and they are required to sign a COVID-19 Treatment Consent Form. If a patient has a temperature of greater than 99.4 degrees Fahrenheit, they will not be allowed in the office and will be asked to reschedule their appointment.
4. To facilitate Social Distancing in the office, schedules are being staggered and patients are asked to wait for their appointments in their vehicles until they are brought in by staff for treatment. All paperwork is filled out by the patient while they remain in their vehicle. No patients or family members are allowed in the Waiting Room at this time.
5. All Patients are given a mask upon arrival in the parking lot. Patients will wear their mask for their visit until the surgical procedure commences. The mask will be replaced immediately at the end of the procedure.
6. After treatment is completed, patients are guided to the check-out desk individually to avoid crowding. Labels on the floor will advise patient where to stand to ensure social distancing. Plexiglass dividers have been added to the front desk area to provide a barrier between patients and staff during check out.

7. Patients and escorts will be asked to refrain from using the restroom while in the office. They will be asked to consider this when making their appointment.
8. Common areas (administrative area, restroom, door handles, hallways, credit card machines) are cleaned every 30 minutes with medical grade disinfecting wipes. Pens and clipboards are wiped after each patient use, and all magazines and books have been removed from the Waiting Rooms and Operatories.
9. All employees are utilizing additional layers of personal protective equipment (PPE):
 - a. Doctors and staff arrive daily to the office in street clothes before changing into scrubs for the day. Shoes are left in the office and disinfected each evening to avoid external contamination.
 - b. Doctors and clinical staff wear clinical jackets or disposable gowns, gloves, and surgical head covering for all patient interactions.
 - c. Facial protection included a N-95 mask overlaid by a Level 3 surgical mask covered by a Face Shield.
 - d. Gloves, surgical masks and jackets are worn by all staff not in direct contact with patients and when disinfecting common areas.
10. Patients are asked to wash their hands upon entrance to and exit of the treatment room for a minimum of 20 seconds. All patients will pre-rinse for 60 seconds with a 1.5% solution of hydrogen peroxide rinse to decrease the viral and bacterial load prior to treatment.
11. Our office uses high-speed suction for all surgical procedures.
12. All paper charts are left outside the operatory as COVID-19 has been reported to remain on surfaces for an unknown period of time.
13. Our office has invested in medical grade air purification systems with HEPA filtration and UV-C light built in for each operatory and the common area.
14. Treatment rooms are thoroughly disinfected with wipes and spray following each patient visit including wiping down of all ancillary clinical equipment including non-clinical equipment (light fixtures, monitors, computer keyboards and mouse).
15. Our office has purchased handheld UV-C lights for sanitizing rooms and equipment. They are effective against viruses and will be used for terminal cleaning in both the operatories and the common areas.
16. Schedules have been altered to allow for time between patients to allow for the updated and thorough cleaning protocol.
17. As information is available through the CDC, OSHA, New Jersey Department of Health, the American Dental Association and the New Jersey Dental Association, these protocols will be updated regularly to provide for the safest possible treatment.

We appreciate our patients' cooperation and understanding as we adhere to these strict safety protocols. Our continued goal is to keep our patients and staff safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. Please feel free to email us with any concerns at pomptonplainsoms@gmail.com. We thank you for choosing Pompton Plains Oral Surgery.