Changes to Our Safety Procedures

With “safety first” as our goal, UTHealth School of Dentistry at Houston has implemented several changes in our processes and safety procedures as we reopen our clinics. As we welcome you back, here is what you can expect.

**COVID-19 Screening:** Before scheduling your appointment, we will review the COVID-19 screening questions with you. When you arrive for your appointment, you will be screened again with questions and a temperature check. We ask patients to leave personal items at home or in the car before entering the building.

**Scheduling:** We have spaced out the schedule so that providers will treat only one patient at a time. We have scheduled time for enhanced disinfection measures between patients.

**Visitor Restrictions:** Visitors/companions are not allowed in the building, except for the following situations:
- Minor patients **must** be accompanied by a parent, legal guardian, or authorized adult proxy who must come in the building and wait in the waiting area during the procedure.
- Adults with special needs requiring assistance may have one visitor/companion accompany them to the appointment.
- Visitors/companions will need to wait in the socially distanced waiting area or outdoors during treatment. All visitors/companions will also be screened prior to building entry.

**Face Masking:** We require all employees, patients, and visitors to wear a mask while they are with us.

**Physical Distancing:** We have rearranged our clinics and internal spaces so that patients, employees, and faculty can maintain appropriate physical distance. Whenever possible, we will ask you to wait in your cars until we are ready to seat you, as we have limited space in our waiting areas.

**Safety Protocols:** We have carefully assessed our clinics and protocols with safety experts and have made the necessary adjustments based on their recommendations.
- You will be asked to wash your hands before and after the procedure.
- You will be asked to rinse with hydrogen peroxide immediately before treatment.
- We will also be wearing more personal protective equipment and using the suction more than usual.

**Treatment Providers and Clinics:** We will be treating patients in clinical areas that have been approved by our safety experts.
- If you are coming for orthodontic or periodontal treatment, you may be treated in a clinical space that is different from where you are usually seen.
• Patients who are usually treated by students will be treated by their instructors instead.

**Cleaning Protocols:** We use disinfectants approved by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for killing the novel coronavirus. In addition to our usual disinfection and sterilization protocols, we are cleaning our high-touch areas inside and outside of the treatment area on a frequent basis.

**Follow-Up:** You will be asked to report to us if you develop symptoms indicative of COVID-19 within 14 days of your procedure.

With these precautions in place, we feel confident that we can keep you and our team safe. Still, while COVID-19 is rampant in our community, some patients are at increased risk of having severe illness if COVID-19 is contracted. We ask those patients to consider deferring care, if possible. Our providers would be happy to talk with you by phone to triage urgent needs and we look forward to welcoming you back when the spread of virus in the Houston area subsides.