

Advice for patients

Routine dentistry during COVID-19 requires the correct social distancing measures and personal protective equipment to be in place. That's why, routine dentistry was suspended with the outbreak of coronavirus. In England, dentists can return to work from 8 June. A phased return is planned in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

What will dental appointments be like?

Practices will be working hard to source protective equipment and put measures in place to maintain social distancing measures. In England, many will not be able to offer all treatments from 8 June, but practices will need to prioritise their patients based upon their needs.

- If you call to make an appointment, you will be asked some screening questions. You'll be asked those same questions again at your appointment
- You will probably be asked to use hand sanitiser or to wash your hands when you arrive (and again before you leave)
- You will also find that waiting rooms might look a little different with two metre markers in place
- You will also notice that the dental team may be wearing different protective equipment to what you are used to seeing
- Appointments will be managed to allow for social distancing between patients. That might mean that you're offered fewer options for scheduling your appointment.

Referrals for certain procedures

Even after our practice has re-opened, please be aware that you may need to be referred to an urgent care centre for treatment.

Some procedures won't be offered right away in every practice. The supply of essential PPE (particularly certain masks) dictates whether a dentist can offer aerosol-generating procedures. As a result, many practices will continue to triage their patients to urgent dental centres for such treatment.

How you can help:

- With the exception of children and persons in need, patients should come alone
- A distance of at least two metres must be observed if another patient is present in the dental practice
- Staff will not shake your hand
- If you show symptoms following appointment booking, you should contact the practice by phone
- Please do not arrive early to the practice. If necessary, you should wait outside the practice
- Please do not arrive without an appointment
- Patients should attend wearing a mask if possible or be prepared to wear one.

It will likely be some time before dental services return to what you previously experienced as normal.

However, your dental teams will be doing all they can to ensure you receive the treatment you require in the safest way.