

Dentists & Covid-19

Can I still visit my dentist?

Please call your dentist first – your practice will be able to give you advice and guidance over the phone on what support is available depending on your condition.

Be prepared for treatments to be postponed until further notice - routine face to face dental services have been suspended all over the country due to covid-19.

If you require **urgent or emergency treatment, call your dentist or 111** and you can be referred to an urgent dental centre.

What if I don't have a dentist and need help?

If you don't have a regular dentist then you can go to <https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-dentist> to find a local dentist for information and advice.

What if I have Covid-19, or think I might have it?

If you need dental care and think you may have Covid-19, it's important to **call your dentist** to discuss what help you might need.

Your dentist will then assess you and give you advice which may include:

- Advice and information on how to manage the condition yourself
- A prescription for appropriate medication
- Asking you to call 111 if you need urgent dental treatment– they can book you into an Urgent Dental Centre nearby

If you have Covid-19 symptoms, it's important to inform the above services of this when you speak to them.

What treatments are, or may be delayed?

The following are examples of treatments that **will** be delayed:

- Routine check ups
- Teeth whitening or any cosmetic treatments
- Scale and polish or hygienist services

The following are examples **may** be delayed dependant on your circumstances:

- Fillings
- Tooth extractions (unless there's pain or swelling)
- Broken or chipped teeth
- Bleeding or sore gums
- Loose teeth (that aren't a choking hazard)
- Concerns about dentures

What face to face treatment is available?

Some patients will need urgent or emergency care which could involve:

- Dental Infections or infections in the mouth
- Severe dental or facial pain that can't be controlled by pain medication
- Broken teeth that expose the nerve
- Dental trauma
- Oral or facial swelling that is significant and worsening
- Post extraction bleeding that cannot be controlled by the patient
- Severe lockjaw
- Tooth extractions or root canal treatment when someone is in pain caused by damage to the nerve in the tooth
- Providing care for patients with complex medical conditions and where not treating may lead to worsening of their general health
- A patient being referred by a doctor for care that is medically necessary

What can I do in the meantime?

Covid-19 is going to be with us for many months, so it's important to look after your oral health by maintaining a healthy diet and oral hygiene routine.

To help prevent dental problems, here are some top tips for great oral health:

- Brush your teeth for two minutes, twice a day with fluoride toothpaste
- The best time to brush is last thing at night, before you go to bed and in the morning when you get up.
- Cut down on how much sugar you have and how often you have it
- Keep sugar consumption to mealtimes - this will reduce the time your teeth are under attack
- Use interdental brushes or floss to clean in between the teeth
- Use mouthwash daily to remove bad bacteria and keep fresh breath
- Sugar-free chewing gum can help produce saliva and neutralise the plaque acids in your mouth

Remember, if you need help:

- Call your dentist first
- If you can't contact your dentist and it's an emergency call 111