Dentists & Covid-19

1. Currently all routine dentistry is suspended

Routine dental treatment is postponed until further notice - routine face-to-face dental services have been suspended all over the country due to COVID-19.

2. If you have an urgent dental problem while routine dentistry is suspended

Please call your dentist first – your dental practice will assess your dental problem and offer you appropriate advice and guidance. This may include analgesia and antibiotics depending on your condition.

If in your dentist's clinical opinion, you require a face-to-face clinical appointment they will ask you to telephone NHS 111 who will then refer you for further telephone assessment by the dental nurse triage service.

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

Please call NHS 111 if you do not have a dentist and think you are in need of urgent dental care.

There are a number of sources of information about dentistry and local dental practices. 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 who may be able to offer you information and advice.

4. What if I have COVID-19, or think I might have it?

If you need urgent 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 and information on how to manage the condition yourself. This may include a prescription for appropriate medication such as analgesics or antibiotics.

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

5. Dental conditions that may require face-to-face dental care following triage

Some patients may require urgent dental care because they have one of the following:
- Dental infections or infections in the mouth
- Dental or facial pain that cannot be controlled by pain medication
- Broken teeth that expose the nerve
- Dental trauma
- Oral or facial swelling
- Bleeding that cannot be stopped
- Providing care for patients with complex medical conditions and where not treating may lead to worsening of their general health

6. What can I do in the meantime?

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

To help prevent dental problems, here are some top tips for maintaining dental 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
- Cut down on sugary foods and drinks- both how much you have and how often you have it
- Keep sugar consumption to mealtimes - this will reduce the time your teeth are under at risk of tooth decay
- Keep your dentures out at night and brush your dentures after meals

Remember, if you have an urgent dental need:

- Call your dentist first
- If you cannot contact your dentist and your dental problem is urgent call NHS 111