

March 31, 2020

Dear Friends,

At Acqua Dental Centre, it has always been our goal to protect the health and safety of our patients and staff.

As the coronavirus (COVID-19) situation evolves, we remain committed to this goal. We continually receive and check for credible sources such as Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH), BC Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA), BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC), BC Dental Association (BCDA), College of Dental Surgeons of BC (CDSBC), and others, and we promise to share with you what we believe warrants caution and what is not worthy of unwarranted fear.

Coronavirus Concerns & Precautions

The Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) is known to cause a respiratory illness, with symptoms of fever, coughing and difficulty breathing. There is currently no vaccination to protect against COVID-19, nor are there drugs proven to specifically treat the virus.

According to the latest information, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) believes at this time that symptoms may appear two days to fourteen days (median time is five days) after exposure.

The emergence of a new infectious disease re-emphasizes the importance of vigilance relative to all aspects of infection control for patients and for dental personnel.

At Acqua Dental Centre, we remain closed except for urgent dental emergencies until further notice. This was mandated by the College of Dental Surgeons as of March 16, 2020.

As a general reminder, health care experts claim that the best prevention against respiratory illness is the following:

- Wash hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth, especially with unwashed hands.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash. If no tissue is available, use your elbow or sleeve.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home and don't go out unless it is absolutely necessary.

Acqua Dental Centre Follows Strict Infection Prevention and Control Guidelines in the Dental Office

Standard Precautions are the minimum infection prevention practices that apply to all patient care, regardless of the suspected or confirmed infection status of the patient, in any setting where health care is delivered.

Transmission-Based Precautions include Contact Precautions, Droplet Precautions and Airborne Precautions, and are based on the likely routes of transmission of specific agents.

Our office protocols are designed to protect our patients and dental personnel. These precautions include:

- Hand hygiene
- Use of personal protective equipment (e.g. gloves, masks, eyewear)
- Sharps safety
- Sterilization of instruments and devices. All instruments are run through an automated washer and then through a high temperature, high pressure, sterilizer. Anything that cannot be sterilized are used once and disposed of. Similarly, any items designed for single use are disposed of.
- All surfaces of our dental treatment rooms are cleaned and disinfected after every patient. The materials and methods used have been shown to be effective for bacteria and viruses.

As with flu outbreaks that came before it, we believe the current coronavirus situation will eventually pass. At present, however, keeping aware of the latest information can lead to the proper balance of caution with reduced fear.

We remain committed to keeping you informed, as well as protecting your health and safety. If you would like to find out more on your own, we highly recommend one of the sources listed above.

Please feel free to share any questions or concerns you may have with us. Call Acqua Dental Centre at 604-273-5919 or send us an email at acquadentalcentre@gmail.com. Please visit our website at: www.acquadental.ca for periodic updates.

Thank you, and keep safe and healthy!

Dr. Alan Lau.