

5/1/2020

Hello to our Orthodontic Family and Friends,

Thank you for your care and patience as we have been temporarily closed in compliance with our Governor's directives during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic. We are very much looking forward to returning to orthodontic care later this month, in the safest possible way for patients and staff. With that in mind, we have a 10-point plan to maximize health and safety in our office going forward.

- 1 All patients will be emailed a link to a **Wellness Survey and updated Informed Consent** that must be filled out in the 24 hours prior to **EACH APPOINTMENT**. This link will come with your regular appointment reminder email. It will also be posted on our front door as a QR code, and will be available on our social media accounts and website, so you can access it anytime.
- 2 All people entering our office must be wearing a **mask**. We are only able to stock enough disposable masks for the use of our staff, so we ask that each person brings their own.
- 3 All people entering our office will have their **temperature** taken (no-touch forehead thermometer) and will be provided with hand sanitizer to use.
- 4 Our reception area will be **closed**. This means we will ask that patients **wait in their car** (or on one of a few benches in our office complex) until their treatment chair is ready. Please arrive 5 minutes early and call the office when you arrive (206) 362-5911. While you wait, please fill out the wellness survey attached to your appointment reminder if you have not already completed it.
- 5 **Only the patient** is permitted in the office. We will make exceptions for the younger patients or those who need special assistance. In that case, one adult may accompany the patient – this person will also be asked to complete the wellness survey, wear a mask, and have their temperature taken. Please no siblings or other guests. Though my favorite part of our office is the family atmosphere, right now we have to love the whole family from afar.
- 6 Half the usual number of patients will be seen in the clinic area at a time, and patients will be seated a minimum of 10-12 feet apart. Dividers have been installed between each chair. Our tooth-brushing area will be closed to prevent cross contamination, so please brush and floss well prior to the appointment. This **"socially distant scheduling"** will unfortunately make finding the perfect appointment time a little more difficult. We understand many of our patients are concerned about not having been seen in our office for some time. We empathize 100%, and so we will be working very hard to catch up on over 500 missed appointments. We will have to see every patient in the order that they were originally scheduled, unless there is an urgent concern. Please request a virtual consultation visit right away in case you have any concerns, so we can make the best plan together. We are committed to getting everyone back on track. If you or a family member have underlying medical conditions that put you at higher risk for complications from communicable diseases, please call or email Kim to arrange for your appointment to occur during a specially-designated time.
- 7 Procedures generating dental **aerosol** (removal of braces or aligner attachments are the most common) will be limited to the end of the day only, and with no other patients present. During this procedure, we will be using a HealthyAir™ unit, which is an aerosol capture system with UV/electromagnetically-enhanced HEPA filtration. Special personal protective equipment and measures will be required for myself and staff for these procedures. These steps in particular are very important to significantly minimize the risks to all staff and patients in our office, and so we cannot be as flexible on scheduling these types of appointments as we were in the past.

- 8 We have invested in multiple medical-grade **air purification** units (Surgically Clean Air™ and MedifyAir™), which also have UV/electromagnetically-enhanced HEPA filters. The SCA units were originally designed for use during the SARS epidemic to eliminate airborne pathogens in clinical spaces, and are the industry leader in medical/dental air purification. Our air purification rate with these units exceeds the CDC's best practices for health care settings (6-12 air exchanges per hour with 99.997% pathogen elimination).
- 9 In addition to our already rigorous **sterilization and disinfection** program that has always exceeded CDC and OSHA guidelines, our office will be undergoing HOCl fumigation 2 times a day for extra disinfection purposes. Our instrument sterilization process will continue to be monitored by an outside company to assure safety. Our staff is undergoing extra training to safely work in our new environment, and have the full protections recommended by all regulatory bodies. The staff and myself will also undergo daily temperature checks and screening questions to monitor our own health.
- 10 Some appointments, like growth observation, retainer monitoring, aligner progress checks, etc. are easier to conduct virtually to save you a trip, and promote social distance. Our office will contact you in advance if this is an option. You may also request a **virtual appointment for any treatment status** if you would feel more comfortable working remotely with us for the time being. We will donate the PPE conserved from these virtual appointments to essential workers and front-line healthcare providers in our area.

Please do not hesitate to contact my office to discuss any questions you may have about our new health and safety policies. I sincerely look forward to seeing you again very soon. We are still working through our missed appointments to reschedule everyone one week at a time, watch for an email from Kim on the new date and time if you haven't already heard from us. Please don't forget to return the wellness survey and treatment consent that will be included with your next appointment reminder.

Thank you so much, stay healthy and well – Amrit K. Burn, DDS, MSD

PS – We are sensitive to the fact that this global situation means hardship for many families, and I assure you that orthodontic treatment in my office will not be compromised due to financial concerns. Please let us know how we can work with you, and please do not postpone coming in for appointments due to financial issues.