

Guidance on Dental Treatment during COVID-19 Pandemic

The following system is designed based on published triaging systems in Australia for Dentistry taking into consideration the following key objectives:

- 1) Proportionate, pre-planned response to the possible escalation of COVID-19 based on the evolving community context
- 2) Potential staged restriction of dental services to reduce transmission risks for COVID-19
- 3) Avoidance of likely burden on medical primary care and emergency services should access to urgent dental care cease.

Case definition (suspected case):

Clinical criteria:

Fever (≥ 38 degrees, without another immediately apparent cause such as urinary tract infection or cellulitis)

OR

Acute respiratory infection (for example, shortness of breath, cough, sore throat)

Epidemiological criteria:

Travelers from overseas with onset of symptoms within 14 days of return or;

Close contacts of confirmed COVID-19 cases with onset of symptoms within 14 days of last contact or;

Healthcare workers and residential aged care workers meeting clinical criteria or;

Aged and residential care residents meeting clinical criteria or;

Patients who are **Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people** meeting clinical criteria

General principles

For all dental treatment, ensure that you:

- use rubber dam
- minimise the generation of aerosols
- use high-speed evacuation

Consider the use of:

- hand instrumentation
- temporary restorations
- atraumatic restorative technique

Operation Level	Services that can be performed	Restricted services
Level 0 (Status Quo) COVID-19 not present	No restrictions on dental treatment	
Level 1 (Prepare) COVID-19 present, but contained	All routine, urgent and emergency dental treatment using standard precautions for people who do not meet epidemiological/clinical criteria for COVID-19. Emergency dental treatment for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - patients with confirmed COVID-19* - suspected COVID-19 cases* who meet epidemiological/clinical criteria * Manage as per ADA COVID-19 Guidelines	Defer urgent dental treatment for suspected cases of COVID-19 who meet epidemiological/clinical criteria until COVID-19 status is confirmed.
Level 2 (Reduce) COVID-19 contained, but community transmission increasing	Some clinically necessary routine dental treatment using standard precautions for people who do not meet epidemiological/clinical criteria for COVID-19. Urgent dental treatment using standard precautions for people who do not meet epidemiological or clinical criteria for COVID-19 Emergency dental treatment for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - patients with confirmed COVID-19* - suspected COVID-19 cases* who meet epidemiological/clinical criteria * Manage as per ADA COVID-19 Guidelines	Defer urgent dental treatment for suspected cases of COVID-19 who meet epidemiological/clinical criteria until COVID-19 status is confirmed. Defer routine dental treatment that is considered to be non-urgent and will not impact on the dental or general health of the patient.
Level 3 (Restrict) Risk that COVID-19 is not contained	Only urgent dental treatment using standard precautions for people who do not meet epidemiological/clinical criteria for COVID-19 Emergency dental treatment for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - patients with confirmed COVID-19* - suspected COVID-19 cases* who meet epidemiological/clinical criteria * Manage as per ADA COVID-19 Guidelines	Defer routine dental treatment using standard precautions for people who do not meet epidemiological or clinical criteria for COVID-19. Defer urgent dental treatment for suspected cases of COVID-19 who meet epidemiological or clinical criteria until COVID-19 status is confirmed
Level 4 (Eliminate) COVID-19 not contained	Emergency dental treatment for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - patients with confirmed COVID-19* - suspected COVID-19 cases* who meet epidemiological/clinical criteria * Manage as per ADA COVID-19 Guidelines	Defer routine and urgent dental treatment using standard precautions for people who do not meet epidemiological or clinical criteria for COVID-19. Defer urgent dental treatment for suspected cases of COVID-19 who meet epidemiological or clinical criteria until COVID-19 status is confirmed

Guide to Emergency and Urgent Dental Treatment

This table provides examples of the types of treatment that might be considered Emergency, Urgent and Non-urgent care.

Emergency Dental Treatment	Urgent Dental Treatment	Routine Dental Treatment
<p>Dental emergencies are situations that require immediate treatment. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Uncontrolled bleeding - Facial swelling (particularly that which may compromise the airway) - Facial trauma (particularly that which may compromise the airway) 	<p>Urgent dental treatment involves managing conditions that cause significant pain, infection or impact on patient health and well-being.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Significant dental pain, usually affecting sleep - Localised infection (abscess, pericoronitis, acute apical infection) - Tooth fracture involving the pulp - Significant dental trauma (avulsion or luxation) - Medically necessary dental treatment (ie. prior to medical/surgical procedures) - <p>Dental conditions that if left untreated for a significant period and may become a dental emergency in 4-6 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Extensive cavitated caries lesions that are currently symptomatic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Routine examination - Routine preventive treatment including scale and clean - Extraction of asymptomatic teeth - Restorative treatment for asymptomatic caries lesions or defective/broken restorations - Aesthetic dental procedures

Dentists should exercise clinical judgement to determine whether to provide care to patients in the context of:

- their specific dental needs
- their overall health
- the ability to provide dental care safely for patients and dental team members
- the current COVID-19 situation in your area
- the availability of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)