Patient communication resource center available to help welcome patients back

The ADA launched a Patient Return Resource Center on July 7 with customizable communication tools for practices to use with patients during this time when many dentists are reopening. The 10-page members-only guide is based on the ADA’s Return to Work Interim Guidance Toolkit developed by the ADA Advisory Task Force on Dental Practice Recovery. These tools are intended to help support dentists and their dental teams in communicating about the changes patients will experience when returning for non-emergent care. It allows for customization so dentists can tailor specific points to their practice and patients. The contents include:

• A comprehensive FAQ to reassure patients with sample responses that address potential patient concerns.
• Different Facebook post options, complete with ready-to-go images and simple photo suggestions.
• A step-by-step visual guide to demonstrate to patients what will happen before, during and after their visit.

Practices can access the Patient Return Resources Center at www.ada.org/patientreturn. Photo/Provided by Dentsply Sirona.

How dental offices are protecting patients and staff

By Kyle D. Bogan, DDS

It’s not exactly business as usual for the dental industry — or patients — as offices reopen for routine care amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The outbreak of the virus has brought several changes, some of which may be permanent, in how dental offices protect their employees and patients.

"Dentists have always prioritized safety, but now we’ve significantly ramped up our precautions and standard practices because we want both patients and workers to feel comfortable during a time of great uncertainty," said Dr. Kyle Bogan, a general dentist and speaker on workplace culture. Bogan points out some concerns of patients and dental staffs and new protocols being implemented:

• Pre-screening patients. The asymptomatic carrier of COVID-19 limits the effectiveness of pre-screening patients for the virus, but patients should be asked a range of relevant pre-visit questions on the phone.
• It forces dental staff to treat every patient as if they have the virus," Bogan said. "Before patients come in, they need to be asked if they’ve had COVID-19 symptoms, and, if so, if they’ve been tested.”
• Upon arrival, a new look. Bogan said staff can allay patients’ fears by informing them of new safety procedures the office is taking. The visit will look and feel different from the moment of arrival.

Patients can expect to wait outside upon arriving for their appointment until summoned by the staff,” he said. “This will greatly reduce the number of people in the waiting room and the time you’re close to other people. And patients should have their temperature taken upon arrival. The office should be devoid of the usual magazines and toys, and hand sanitizer should be available.”

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Socializing in the Hamptons

Editor in chief Dr. David L. Hoexter shares images from the days before social distancing

Above, at the Southampton Art Festival, from left, Dr. Igor Gerzon, Dr. David L. Hoexter and Dr. Liza Kaufman.

Top left, Robert Janesh, chef at the prestigious Noyac Golf Club in Sag Harbor, N.Y., and husband of Dena (Straumann Implant executive), with Dr. David L. Hoexter, editor in chief of Dental Tribune.

Bottom left, Dr. Larry Bryskin, winner of his division in the Ellen’s Run 5k race to help avoid and cure breast cancer, proudly displays his winning T-shirt at his oral check-up visit.

Photos/Provided by Dr. David L. Hoexter, Editor in Chief, Dental Tribune

• RESOURCES CENTER, page A1

• PROTECTING, page A1

• Helping fearful employees. It's understandable if oral care workers are hesitant to return, and Bogan said it's important to engage them in dialogue about their concerns.

"The person may be worried about contracting the virus from a patient or co-worker," he said. "They may be high-risk or have someone at home who is. Ask them what you could do to alleviate their concerns, and make sure your office is following the CDC and ADA recommendations and requirements."

• Aerosols and protection. Most dental procedures create aerosols — sprays of saliva or blood from a patient's mouth splashing into the air.

Given the possibility of the virus being included in those particles, the attending staff around the patient should wear more personal protective equipment, and environmental upgrades also are advisable.

"The ADA recommends face shields, N95 and KN95 masks, goggles and disposable gowns," Bogan said. "Some practices are installing plexiglass in the front office area, air-purification systems and ultraviolet lights to reduce exposure to aerosols."

• Diligent hygiene and cleaning. "Dentists and hygienists should adhere strictly to hand hygiene measures," Bogan said, "including before and after contact with patients, after contact with contaminated surfaces or equipment, and after removing PPE. Disposable gowns should be discarded in a dedicated waste container. Cloth isolation gowns should be laundered after each use. The staff should thoroughly clean patient treatment areas before appointments."

"It's important for people to get back to the dentist for routine treatment," Bogan said. "The virus can give some people a reason to stay away, so it's critical for dental practices to do all the right things to mitigate risk."

About the doctor

Dr. Kyle Bogan is a general dentist and a speaker/workplace culture. Bogan earned a fellowship in the ACD and the International College of Dentists. He is a member of the ADA, the Ohio Dental Association, the International Dental Implant Association and the ACD. Contact him at www.drkyalebogan.com.

Resources

Access the Patient Return Resources Center at www.ada.org/patientreturn.
America’s ToothFairy launches campaign for kids during COVID-19

By America’s ToothFairy Staff

As children across the country stay close to home to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, America’s ToothFairy is helping them make good use of their time by learning about the prevention of tooth decay.

The superhero-themed Oral Health Action HERO Challenge runs through Aug. 15. During the campaign, kids will complete five educational missions to learn how to defeat the villain, “The Evil DK (Decay),” and keep their smiles healthy. The campaign was developed after COVID-19 lockdowns brought most in-person group instruction and educational projects to a halt. Since the HERO Challenge can be completed by children at home, essential lessons that help kids prevent the consequences of tooth decay can continue.

All participants who complete the missions will receive recognition as “Oral Health Action Heroes,” and the first 25 kids to submit a video about what they learned will receive a prize package that includes a t-shirt, activity book and more.

Three finalists will be selected to compete in an online voting program to determine who defeats “The Evil DK (Decay)” and wins the Champion Crystal trophy.

“Prevention of tooth decay through education is a major component of our mission,” said America’s ToothFairy Executive Director Jill Malmgren. “The HERO Challenge campaign enables children to safely learn about oral health in a fun way at home. We are excited to see the creative videos the kids make to show what they’ve learned while participating in the missions. The videos will help spread awareness about the importance of oral health and how to prevent cavities.”

The campaign is made possible by a donation from DentaQuest, which has also been a long-time sponsor of America’s ToothFairy’s HERO Scout Patch initiative.

Kids must register online to participate and receive their mission instructions. More details about the campaign and how to register is available at AmericasToothFairyKids.org.

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AAPD, AAPD Foundation and Henry Schein to help enhance access to dental care for children

By Henry Schein Staff

In the largest single commitment in its 33-year history, the AAPD Foundation has allocated up to $1.6 million to provide all AAPD members with one 50-count box supply of KN95 masks, in a joint collaboration between the foundation and the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry.

As part of Henry Schein Inc.’s commitment to help enhance access to care for vulnerable populations, including children, Henry Schein is providing these masks to the AAPD Foundation at its cost of acquisition and distribution. “Personal protection equipment [PPE] availability should not be a barrier to child dental care,” said AAPD President Dr. Jessica Lee. “We are grateful to Henry Schein for helping make these masks available to our members, without financial gain, and to the foundation for underwriting this important access to care effort.”

The AAPD Foundation’s provision of critical PPE for AAPD members is an extension of its access-to-care mission. The AAPD Foundation is purchasing the KN95 masks, including paying sales tax and shipping, the AAPD is handling the ordering logistics for its members; and Henry Schein is leveraging its supply chain network to provide implementation assistance at its cost.

“As practices open across the country, the academy and foundation want to make sure there are as few delays as possible in children receiving the care they need,” said Foundation President Dr. Charles Czerepak. “Henry Schein’s quick response to offer essential supplies will help prevent disruptions in patient care that can help prevent treatable cases from turning into emergencies.”

While manufacturers, suppliers and distributors face unprecedented demand, coupled with supply chain gaps worldwide, Henry Schein understood academy members’ front-line roles in providing care to children and the need to ensure this workforce’s protection. “We are privileged that the academy and foundation approached us for assistance in securing PPE for its membership and administering this important project,” said AJ Caffentzis, president, U.S. Dental Distribution. “As part of Henry Schein’s dedication to ‘helping health happen,’ we recognize pediatric dentists’ critical public health role, and welcome the opportunity to contribute toward supporting these essential providers.”

This collaboration is part of the academy’s broader effort to provide resources to ensure practice readiness and safe, comprehensive care. The academy in April released a guide for re-opening practices, and it continues its work with local, state and federal government agencies to ensure they recognize children’s oral health care as essential health care.

In addition to access to KN95 masks, the foundation’s $1.6 million commitment will help fund the development of a public education campaign emphasizing dental office safety. The campaign will feature social media, direct-to-consumer outreach and materials for member use in their practices.
Protect yourself against aerosols

By Designs for Vision Staff

In today’s world, it is especially important to make sure you have the proper eyewear. To that end, Designs for Vision is offering a variety of new product lines.

Design for Vision’s new Aerosol Protection Loupes creates a seal around your eyes to protect against aerosols. These loupes are available with 2.5x, 3.0x and 3.5x magnifications and come in two frame styles.

The company is also offering the LoupeSaver™ Face Shield. The product is made from optical grade plastic and has a flat panel design that reduces optical aberrations.

The shield can be clipped to loupes, with no headband needed, allowing a headlight to be placed inside or outside of the shield.

In addition to these products, Designs for Vision has launched several new product lines in the past few months, including the new patented Panoramic Field Loupes (US pat. 8,928,975B2).

According to the company, the Panoramic Loupes represent the most significant advancement in telescope design in more than 100 years. The viewable areas are twice as large as prismatic expanded-field designed loupes and up to five times greater than Galilean loupes. Panoramic Field loupes provide unprecedented field of view, clarity, definition and color, the company asserts.

Designs for Vision is also adding the Micro 3.0EF to the award-winning Micro SeriesLoupes. The Micro 3.0EF has a field of view of 100 mm and weighs less than 70 grams. The Micro Series also includes REALITY 5 Star rated Micro 3.5EF Scopes and Micro 4.5EF Scopes.

These scopes use a revolutionary optical design that reduces the size of the prismatic telescope by 50 percent and reduces the weight by 40 percent while providing an expanded field view of the oral cavity.

If you want the lightest 3.0x magnification, get the new 3.0x Galilean loupes. According to the company, the lightweight Galilean design enables clinicians to step up in magnification while retaining an expansive 70 mm field of view.

Designs for Vision is also introducing patented (US pat. 8,939,009 & RE46,463) hands-free infrared technology with the WireLess IR HDI and the Micro IR HDI headlamps. The patented IR feature enables practitioners to operate a headlight without touching the system. The IR headlamps use a built-in infrared signal to enable the user to turn the light on or off simply and safely, according to the company. Onboard biometrics sense the position of the headlight to filter out unintended signals while working.

Designs for Vision’s WireLess™ headlights free practitioners from being tethered to a battery pack. The modular designs uncouple the headlights from a specific frame or single pair of loupes.

You can see the Visible Difference® yourself by visiting Designs for Vision at www.designsforvision.com. The company is taking appointments for virtual meetings, and you can also find information on selecting an N95 mask that accommodates eyewear as well as nose pad adjustments to fit properly over the mask as well as information on disinfection procedures for loupes and headlamps.

According to Designs for Vision, the new Panoramic Field Loupes represent the most significant advancement in telescope design in more than 100 years. Graphic/Provided by Designs for Vision
BIOLASE’s Epic Hygiene laser meets guidelines to minimize risk of COVID-19

By BIOLASE Staff

BIOLASE, a global leader in dental lasers, has announced the Epic Hygiene dental laser meets recent guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), which recommends not using ultrasonic scalers in order to prevent the transmission of COVID-19. Ultrasonic scalers create a visible water spray that can contain particle droplets of water, saliva, blood, microorganisms and other debris that can serve as a conduit to spread the virus.

As dental offices begin to open their doors, they can rely on the Epic Hygiene laser for Laser Bacterial Reduction therapy, which was cleared by the Food and Drug Administration in March. This indication allows hygienists to perform gentler, highly effective treatments for bacterial reduction and manage periodontal disease without using water.

“We have already seen how all-tissue Waterlase dental lasers create 98 percent less aerosol than traditional dental handpieces,” said Todd Norbe, CEO of BIOLASE. “We are proud that we have continued to see our products, like the Epic Hygiene laser, meet the unique needs of dentists during this time.”

Epic Hygiene is the latest innovation in proven Epic laser technology, designed by dental hygienists for dental hygienists. This new laser system gives dental professionals a total solution to effectively manage non-surgical periodontitis and increase clinical production. The system includes step-by-step clinical protocols, including pocket therapy and periodontal debridement, for easy implementation.

To learn more
For more information about the Epic Hygiene laser, visit biolase.com/epichygiene.
AAID develops patient guide for what to expect at a dentist appointment during COVID-19

AAID dentists provide resource to help people prepare and take precautions for their next dental visit

By AAID Staff

As the country gradually emerges from lockdown, the American Academy of Implant Dentistry (AAID) has released a new resource to help people prepare for their next dentist appointment.

The checklist, “What to Expect: Going to the Dentist After Stay-at-Home Order is Lifted,” illustrates the safety measures and protocol to expect as dentist offices re-open for all types of visits and preventative procedures.

The resource is a collaboration with AAID dentists who own practices across the nation and have followed CDC infection control procedures for years. They are now implementing extra steps to protect patients and staff.

“As my practice begins to re-open for routine check-ups, the health and safety of patients and staff is of highest priority,” said Grace Chung, DDS. “It’s important that we let patients know ahead of their appointment what precautions will be in place to reduce the spread of COVID-19 so they can rest assured we’re doing everything possible to keep them safe.”

The downloadable resource covers what to expect before, during and after an appointment.

It serves as a reminder for patients of what to bring and not to bring to their appointment and includes space to write down questions.

Resources

About the AAID
Founded in 1951, the AAID was the first organization in the United States dedicated to developing and improving dental implant treatment solutions. Its credentialing program reinforces that these individuals are at the highest standards of competency in the profession.

For more information, contact the AAID at info@aaid.com or call (312) 335-1550.

Improve dental implant surgery with X-Mark

By X-Nav Technologies Staff

X-Nav Technologies has announced that it has received 510(k) clearance from the U.S. Food & Drug Administration for X-Mark™, a new virtual patient registration technology that advances navigated dental implant surgery.

X-Mark enhances the X-Guide® Dynamic 3D Navigation system to give dentists the ability to deliver more accurate dental implant procedures to more patients seeking new teeth. X-Mark features breakthrough technology to facilitate virtual-based registration of the patient’s anatomy to a digital treatment plan, according to the company. Developed to be fast and easy, the dentist will prepare for surgery by marking three virtual anatomy points on the patient’s 3-D scan and then marking the same three live points on the patient at the time of surgery.

The X-Guide system will then use the X-Mark technology to quickly match the points together to enable live navigated surgery — with accuracy and ease, the company asserts.

X-Mark allows the dentist to provide all the benefits of less-invasive navigated surgery in more case presentations — from single tooth replacement to full mouth edentulous reconstruction.

To learn more
Join the largest educational network in dentistry!