

A Patient's Guide to Safety Enhancements at Parker Periodontics and Implant Dentistry (PPID)

During our office shutdown in April 2020, Dr. Parker and our team have completed over 70 hours of continuing education to gain a greater understanding of the COVID-19 virus and its methods of infection. A comprehensive list of all the proactive steps PPID has taken to protect patients and team members follows. But, before reviewing the list, Dr. Parker feels a little background is important.

Prior to COVID-19, dental offices practiced universal infection control precautions and have been consistently applauded for their strict adherence to providing a safe treatment and work environment. Our precautions have been extremely effective for over 20 years at reducing the risk of virus transmission. Over that time, blood and saliva-borne viral infections like hepatitis and HIV have been successfully kept out of dental offices. So, we come into this new challenge with a strong track record for delivering care safely.

In May 2020, the following safety measures were initiated to keep patients and team members safe:

- 1) A pre-appointment patient screening questionnaire was introduced
- 2) Patient and team member temperature checks began
- 3) PPID acquired replenishable supplies of personal protective equipment (PPE) for all team members. This includes N95 masks, disposable gowns and head coverings, nitrile gloves, and eye protection.
- 4) Patient appointments are being staggered and patients are being called into the office via text messages when it is their time to be seen. Patient drivers are being asked to wait in the car. Sedated patients are being delivered via wheelchair to their drivers in the parking lot.
- 5) Tele-dentistry is being utilized to supplement the patient experience. Our goal is to continue to provide a high level of customer service while limiting the amount of time patients spend in the office.
- 6) New patient appointments, post-op visits, and annual implant evaluations are being conducted in the morning prior to procedures that may generate an aerosol.
- 7) Enhanced intra-oral and extra-oral suction equipment is being utilized to trap aerosols created during treatment before they can disperse into the surrounding air
- 8) The office is physically being separated into two wings. This is designed to limit the number of patients sharing the office space on any given day.
- 9) A plasma ionization system was installed centrally to purify air throughout the office. This system operates by literally sheering viral particles and killing them. This system was chosen because it effectively neutralizes viral particles in both the air and on surfaces throughout the entire office.
- 10) An additional hour is allotted to our team each clinical day for enhanced room disinfection including surface cleaning.
- 11) Priority scheduling for chronically ill, COVID-19 negative dental patients is available

Taken together, I am confident that these measures create the safest dental experience in Cincinnati. Many of our team members have family members with chronic health conditions that make them at a higher risk for a poor outcome should they contract COVID-19. Our office is our second home and we want it to be safe for everyone. We take your trust and your safety seriously. Working together we can provide vital dental care safely.