

Standard Operating Procedure: COVID-19 Testing in Dental Practices

Developed By	Clinical Operations
Audience	Doctors, Clinical Teams, Office Managers, Regional Leadership, Market Leadership
Effective as of	4/2020



I. Purpose

As the COVID-19 pandemic escalates, increasing testing capacity will further allow dentists to help the overall healthcare community by identifying a wider group of COVID positive patients. It is critical for close collaboration of all healthcare providers to help reduce viral community spread. Screening measures in dental practices will help reduce the surge in traditional testing facilities and help flatten the curve. This standard operating procedure is to provide directions on important actions to follow when performing COVID-19 diagnostic tests.

II. Scope

The following scenarios prompt COVID-19 testing in dental practices:

- All dental practice team members actively working in the practice
- Any patient reporting to the practice who answers “Yes” to any of the following screening protocol questions:
 - Have you traveled internationally in the last 30 days?
 - To your knowledge, have you been in contact with a COVID-19 patient?
 - Are you experiencing any flu-like symptoms?
 - Shortness of breath?
 - Fever?
 - Cough?

III. Procedure

A. Triage and Intake:

1. Identifying candidates for COVID-19 screening:
 - A. Dentist working in practice, and/or
 - B. Primary Care Physician (PCP) identifies patients needing test
 - C. Clinicians should use their judgement to determine if a patient has signs and symptoms compatible with COVID-19 and whether the patient should be tested, based on established screening protocol above.
2. Obtain patient’s consent by having them complete an Intake Form
3. Verify patient’s demographics, insurance information and contact number to report results
4. Provide patient a copy of the COVID-19 information sheet for educational purposes (*to be developed*)

B. Administer the test:

Must be completed by a doctor until regulations allow other dental professionals the ability to administer.

	<p>1 Open the individual collection package that contains the swab and Viral Transport Medium tube. Set the tube aside before beginning to collect the specimen.</p>		<p>5 As a visual reference, the swab should be inserted about half the distance from the opening of the patient's nostril and the ear. Rotate the swab several times.</p>
	<p>2 Open the collection swab wrapper by peeling open the top of the wrapper. Remove the swab, taking care not to touch the tip of the swab or lay it down.</p>		<p>6 While holding the swab in the same hand, aseptically remove the cap from the tube. Insert the swab into the tube with the transport medium.</p>
	<p>3 Hold the swab in your hand, placing your thumb and forefinger in the middle of the swab shaft across the scoreline.</p>		<p>7 Identifying the scoreline, break the swab shaft against the side of the tube. If needed, gently rotate the swab shaft to complete the breakage. Discard the top portion of the swab shaft. Avoid splashing contents on the skin. Wash with soap and water if exposed.</p>
	<p>4 Gently insert the swab into the nostril. Keep the swab near the septum floor of the nose while gently pushing the swab into the post nasopharynx.</p>		

C. Specimen handling:

- After test is completed, to ensure accuracy, have patient confirm name and demographics on sample obtained.
- Place specimen in designated receptacle for transport to approved laboratory as end of day procedures.
- Skip step if COVID-19 rapid test is available.

D. Patient Instructions:

For Negative test results:

- Provide patient negative test results documentation.
- Proceed with dental treatment.

For Positive test results:

- Inform patient that dental treatment will be postponed until a time when they are well
- Consistent with CDC recommendations, patients are given the following instructions:

CDC Guidance: [Steps When Sick](#) (Link)

- Stay home except to get medical care
- Separate yourself from other people and pets in your home
- Monitor your symptoms
- If you develop emergency warning signs for COVID-19 get medical attention immediately, i.e.
 - Trouble breathing
 - Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
 - New confusion or inability to arouse
 - Bluish lips or face

- **Reporting:** The CDC guidelines require that we report findings for Positive tests with both local and state Health Departments by completing the **Novel Coronavirus Case Report Form** found [here](#) (Link)
 - State Health Departments: <https://www.cste.org/page/EpiOnCall>
 - Local Health Departments: <https://www.naccho.org/membership/lhd-directory>

E. Send patient specimen to lab for processing:

- a. As part of end of day procedures, send patient samples/specimen to approved lab for processing.
- b. Document all specimen sent for proper reconciliation.

F. Daily, assign team member to call patients to report test results and patient education. (*Doctor only as of now*)

- a. If rapid tests are available, skip step as results are reported within minutes of taking specimen.

III. Billing

1. Claim Submission:

- a. Work with your respective billing team to ensure claims are submitted timely.
- b. A claim submission includes the services provided to each patient. Each claim detail line identifies the procedure and the date it was delivered to the patient.
 1. D9999 – Unspecified dental procedure by report
 2. Include narrative that COVID-19 test was administered on site
 3. PCPs are allowed to bill for read, interpretation, and therapy