

Dental Team and infection prevention and control (Covid-19)

Preamble

Covid19 is transmitted from people who are infected, ill or asymptomatic carriers of the virus, by direct transmission of particles emitted when coughing, sneezing or simply talking, or indirect transmission through contact via a contaminated surface (WHO, 2020; HCSP, 5 March 2020; WHO, 2020).

There is therefore a need for both "droplet" and "contact" type prevention. Aerosol is one of the main routes of transmission and should be taken into account in dental practices.

As the dental team is in direct contact with the patients, the rules of hygiene and protection must be respected and applied.

Activity of the dental team

Dentist

A dentist who has two or more symptoms of the COVID-19 must contact his or her attending physician, any dedicated person or the healthcare system. The latter will assess the situation with regard to the individual's state of health, working conditions, the risk of exposure and the epidemic context in the area, whether or not it is possible for the practitioner to continue his or her professional activity.

Others members

When a member of the dental team presents at least one of symptoms of COVID-19, he or she must interrupt his or her work activity. They should contact his or her occupational physician or attending physician to assess the symptoms and receive a test if required. In the case of salaried staff, they must inform their employer and follow an isolation protocol if necessary.

Personal hygiene measures

All persons working in the dental practice should take the following precautions:

- Forearms free
- Short nails, without varnish, nail polish, false nails or solid resins,
- Do not wear jewelry on hands and wrists (bracelet, ring, wedding band, watch). Wearing earrings or a necklace is not recommended;
- Preferably not have a beard

- Tie medium or long hair;
- Wear surgical clothing appropriate for the activity.
- Staff should change into and out of uniforms at work.
- As far as possible, professional clothing should not be washed at home: consider providing a washing facility within the practice or by a service provider (minimum: 30 minutes at 60 degrees);
- Using an SHA or washing hands and forearms with soap should be carried out after each change of outfit.
- Wear and change gloves between each patient.

Protective clothing

- Non-care team (non-care staff never entering the care space, including the dental technicians)

Continuous wearing of the surgical mask or type 2R is required. In the absence of effective splash protection in the reception area (glass, plastic panel, etc.), it is recommended to wear goggles or a face shield.

The wearing time of the same surgical mask or type 2R must not exceed 4 hours, failing which the manufacturer's recommendations must be followed, while respecting the rules of use and professional guidance

- Care team (dentist and other dental team members entering the care space)

The entire dental team and those who carry out infection control procedures of the treatment room must be equipped with the same personal protective equipment (PPE).

The care team must wear professional clothing dedicated to the care activity:

- trousers,
- tunic with short sleeves,
- closed shoes.

For certain treatments, it is necessary to wear additional PPE such as cap, overalls, apron....

Eye protection / Protective goggles and/or face shield

The face shield protects the mask and limits the risk of it becoming soiled. Some "home-made" face shields may not be strong enough to withstand the projection of dental debris or fractured burs, for example. In this case, it seems reasonable to wear glasses under the face shield.

Breathing protection

Masks should be worn in accordance with the recommendations of each national authority. However, wearing an FFP2 mask without valves (or equivalent, e.g. N95, KN95, etc.) is recommended during aerosol-generating treatments.

An FFP2 mask is normally a single-use mask. In the event of a shortage, it is possible to extend its use without exceeding the maximum duration of 8 hours, but due to the discomfort associated with prolonged wearing of such a mask, it is advisable to keep it for a maximum of 4 hours. The FFP2 mask can be kept for several patients if it is not soiled, wet or handled. When the caregiver is not wearing an FFP2 mask, continuous wearing of the surgical mask and type 2R is required in accordance with professional rules.

Cleaning of professional clothing

Changing the professional outfit at the end of each half-day and as soon as it is soiled or wet is highly recommended
Used professional clothing must not be in contact with the patients.

Work area

The entire dental team must ensure that the appropriate protocol for disinfection of all surfaces in the dental practice (in the treatment room and outside) and items that have been in contact with the patient's oral cavity are observed.

The entire dental team must ensure that the ventilation protocols for the various rooms of the dental practice, including the prosthetic laboratory, are respected.