

Maryland State Board of Dental Examiners

CDC COVID-19 Update

July 21, 2021

In the past two weeks, COVID-19 cases in the United States increased by about 140% and hospitalizations and deaths are up approximately 30%. Most of this is attributable to the Delta variant, which is incredibly infectious and highly transmissible. To put the higher transmission in perspective, each person infected with the original Wuhan SARS-CoV-2 virus was likely to infect two and a half to three others. Someone infected with the Delta variant is likely to infect eight or nine people, who in turn can infect another eight or nine people, and so on, triggering exponential spread. The current COVID-19 vaccines have proven highly effective in preventing serious disease, hospitalization and death. If you have not gotten vaccinated, ***please get vaccinated as soon as possible.***

Due to the emergence of the Delta variant, it is of utmost importance that all dental practitioners rigidly adhere to the COVID-19 infection control policies as delineated in the December 4, 2021 CDC Guidelines, which are accessible at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/dental-settings.html>

On July 13, 2021, CDC made an edit to the December 4, 2020 version of the COVID-19 [Guidance for Dental Settings](#) as well as the [Considerations for School Sealant Programs During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Pandemic](#). Previously, the guidance stated that dental healthcare personnel should avoid aerosol-generating procedures for all patients, regardless of known or suspected SARS-CoV-2 infection status. **Please note:** dental healthcare personnel should continue to avoid aerosol-generating procedures for patients **with suspected or confirmed** SARS-CoV-2 infection, if possible. Dental health care personnel should continue to practice standard precautions and recommendations contained in the December 4, 2020 version of the COVID-19 Guidance for Dental Settings for all patients, even those with no symptoms of SARS-CoV-2 infection.

1. [Guidelines for infection control in dental health-care settings—2003](#). *MMWR Recomm Rep*. 2003;52(RR-17):1–61.
2. Infection Prevention Checklist for Dental Settings <https://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/infectioncontrol/pdf/safe-care-checklist.pdf>
3. Interim Infection Prevention and Control Guidance for Dental Settings During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic: Updated December 4, 2020 <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/dental-settings.html>