



NEWNHAM DENTAL PRACTICE

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RE-OPENING PROTOCOLS AND INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS



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POST COVID-19 REOPENING POLICY

This policy has been created based on multiple updated sources from within the dental and medical professions and the government. It outlines modifications to our normal procedures that we intend to employ once the practice can be reopened after the COVID-19 pandemic peak has subsided.

It is not known at this time whether these procedures are temporary or whether they will become a permanent feature of the way dental practices must be run to ensure patient and staff safety in the future.

The worldwide COVID-19 pandemic is still being evaluated and studied and policies and recommendations are likely to change in line with new scientific evidence over time. We would like to thank all of our patients for their patience and forbearance during the period of temporary practice closure and for their understanding and cooperation whilst we implement new measures at the practice. We will of course be providing dental care to all of our patients in the safest possible environment. We greatly appreciate your assistance with any new or modified procedures at the practice.



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PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE

The practice will re-open for patients who require essential dental treatment on the 4th of June 2020. This will be extended to other patient groups as the lockdown restrictions are eased further.

The Newnham team will prepare the practice for reopening and practising our updated procedures before patients return to the practice. We will initially be seeing:

- Patients with emergency problems or other dental problems that require urgent assessment and treatment;

When the lockdown restrictions are further lifted (8th of June 2020) we will be able to see:

- Patients with treatment that was not completed prior to the lockdown;
- Patients who were due for routine examinations and hygienist visits during the period of closure;
- Patients who are due orthodontic reviews (awaiting guidelines).

PATIENT COMMUNICATION BEFORE RE-OPENING

We will be contacting patients and confirming appointments ahead of their scheduled time. We will request that all patients who are attending Newnham dental update their standard medical and dental history forms beforehand. The assessment forms include a new section which will allow us to assess your level of risk for coronavirus infection before you attend the surgery.

NEW MEASURES TO REDUCE THE RISK OF COVID-19 TRANSMISSION

Our normal cross-infection control protocols at Newnham dental against all previously known pathogens are already woven into all clinical activity carried out at the practice.

It should be remembered that a dental practice is already a very clean environment compared to public areas and there is no evidence of COVID-19 transmission occurring in increased rates in dentists or their staff.

We have collectively evaluated all of the updated guidance and observed what



NEWNHAM DENTAL PRACTICE

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measures have been put in place in other countries as well as recommended by NHS England. The measures outlined in this policy will reduce risk to the minimum level at the practice. Please be assured that all of our clinical staff will also be complying with our updated procedures to reduce the risk of cross infection in both directions.

BEFORE ATTENDING THE PRACTICE

We will carry out a pre-attendance assessment via your completed Medical History/Assessment forms before your appointment and, if necessary, a follow-up telephone conversation to assess relative coronavirus infection risk.

We may also carry out an e-consultation with you to assess your dental problem prior to your visit so that a treatment plan and cost estimate can be sent to you.

If we feel that you are at risk of having possibly been infected, even if you are asymptomatic, we will respectfully request for you to delay booking any appointments with us for at least one month.

We recommend that patients in the high-risk groups for developing complications from coronavirus delay non-essential dental treatment for as long as possible until the trend of the pandemic becomes clear. If you are in a high risk group and do require treatment we will schedule your appointment at the beginning of the day. To find out whether you are in a high or very high-risk group please see the link here.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk-from-coronavirus/whos-at-higher-risk-from-coronavirus/>

Newnham dental practice will be operating card payment systems going forwards, and we will request that payment is made online or over the phone for your appointment prior to you attending if you do not have a means of making card payment at the time of your visit.

When travelling to the practice, we would recommend that you limit close contact with other members of the public as far as possible.

We will meet all patients at the front door and bring them straight into the surgery. One adult is able to attend with a child; please do not bring additional



NEWNHAM DENTAL PRACTICE

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Specialist Orthodontics

family members with you unless they are happy to wait in the car or outside the building.



AT THE PRACTICE

When you attend the practice, we will welcome you, and ask for you to hang your coat or jacket in the porch entrance to the practice. The front door will remain locked, however we cannot accept liability for personal items so please limit what you bring into the building.

We will take your temperature with a no-touch thermometer. If your temperature is above 37.8°C, you will be unable to enter the practice and will be asked to return home and self-isolate as per current government guidelines.

We intend to eliminate waiting inside the practice and at reception. Accordingly, appointments will be staggered so that patients do not arrive or leave at the same time as other patients as far as we are able to manage. When using the restrooms, please do your best to ensure that you leave the facilities as you would expect to find them and wash your hand thoroughly.



NEWNHAM DENTAL PRACTICE

Family Dentistry | Dental Implants
Specialist Orthodontics

The restrooms will be regularly disinfected between patients .

We will direct you straight to the surgery and request that you do the following before or during your appointment:

- Use the hand sanitiser in the reception area or
- Thoroughly wash your hands for 30 seconds with the antiseptic hand wash provided in the surgery
- We may ask you to use a Hydrogen Peroxide mouthwash before some dental treatments are provided
- We tend to use Rubber dam for most procedures and it has been recommended to continue to do so. We know our patients are used to this so this should not be a major adjustment.

PRACTICE PROCEDURES

The Newnham team have spent time critically looking at every aspect of the practice with a view to removing all non-essential items. You will find that the practice may appear to be quite bare when you attend.

We regret that during this interim period, we will not be chatting with you the way we love to do. This is to reduce traffic and to ensure that we can catch up on the number of patients who have not been able to access dentistry for the past few months.

All clinical and common areas including door handles and surfaces will be regularly disinfected in addition to our normal surface cleaning protocols between patients.

Newnham dental will be providing a buffer period between patients to allow additional time for additional decontamination procedures, allow for any treatment overruns and allow preparation time for the next patient so that they do not need to wait in the reception area.

All future appointments will be made and confirmed by email or telephone to limit your time spent at reception.



NEWNHAM DENTAL PRACTICE

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Specialist Orthodontics

DENTAL PROCEDURES

All dental staff will be using personal protective equipment in line with current recommendations and evidence.

We apologise in advance for the necessary reduction in social interaction that this will necessitate. Whilst our masks may make us appear impersonal and distant, please be assured we are still the same friendly team underneath it all!

We are especially mindful that many dental treatments are aerosol-generating procedures (AGP's). It is difficult for us to carry out some dental procedures without generation of some level of aerosol. Aerosol suspended in the air is a *theoretical source* of infection which we obviously wish to keep to a minimum. This is not evidence based.

Currently the dental literature suggests:

Our use of our normal high-volume suction reduces aerosol production by over 90%. The use of dental rubber dam where possible reduces bio aerosols by a further 30 to 90% Our regular surgical facemasks filter approximately 60% of remaining airborne particles. FFP2 and FFP3 masks filter 94% and 99% respectively of airborne particles in both directions (patient to clinician and clinician to patient).

Our normal dental procedures can be carried out with minimal risk by the use of high-volume suction, rubber dam, surgical and FFP2 masks and FFP3 masks as appropriate.

Despite the financial impact of the coronavirus, Newnham dental will not be increasing its normal fees unless absolutely necessary. However, the time taken to carry out treatment sessions may need to be extended which will be included into the fees for your procedure. The hygiene fees will increase from £61 to £69 due to taking more time to disinfect the surgeries between sessions.

The vast majority of our patients are otherwise healthy without coronavirus infection and we are confident that we are able to provide dental care for these patients in as normal an environment as possible while bearing in mind our responsibilities to mitigate risks of infection spread as far as is practically possible. This policy will be constantly reviewed and updated as necessitated by circumstances over time.



NEWNHAM DENTAL PRACTICE

Family Dentistry | Dental Implants
Specialist Orthodontics

If you have any questions regarding this policy or about your dental care at newnham dental practice, please contact us on info@newnhamdental.co.uk.

Finally, We are all Really looking forward to seeing you at the practice!

Kindest regards,
The team at Newnham dental practice