

## ISDS Issues Guidance Related to COVID-19

By **Ericka Adler**

The Illinois State Dental Society (ISDS) has issued guidance related to COVID-19. ISDS has noted that dentists are one of the highest risk categories for transmission and contraction of the virus with many routine dental procedures potentially transmitting the virus via aerosolization of fluids.

Following the lead of Governor Pritzker of Illinois, the ISDS has recommended that in an effort to flatten the curve for health care workers and first responders, the ISDS recommends the closing of dental offices for a 2-week period beginning Tuesday, March 17 through Tuesday, March 31, 2020 and suggested such dentists:

- Treat only patients requiring emergency dental procedures.
- Postpone elective dental treatments and procedures.
- Preserve personal protection equipment for emergency dental situations in an effort to preserve limited supply.
- Communicate the utmost importance of the health and safety of patients, the dental team and community in implementing these measures.

The ISDS also made some additional recommendations to prevent potential exposure:

- Prescreen patients by phone prior to visit asking about recent travel history and current health. Patients reporting symptoms should be referred to primary care physicians and should not be visiting the dental office.
- Ask patients to remain in their cars instead of coming into the waiting room until they are notified that the treatment room is ready.
- Minimize the number of patients in the reception area maintain space between patient per CDC guidelines.
- Take temperature of all patients immediately upon arrival.
- Have patients wash hands in the operatory and rinse with 1% hydrogen peroxide solution.
- Clean and disinfect public areas frequently including door handles, chairs and bathrooms.
- Remove all reading materials and children's toys and books from waiting rooms.

The ISDS has made these recommendations in an effort to limit the spread of COVID-19. Clearly, this is a fluid situation and we can expect ongoing updates. Please feel free to contact our office if you have questions.

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