

Preparing for your dental appointment: Coronavirus precautions

During the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, our staff have been working hard to ensure that all patients receive the urgent care they need, not just those patients with coronavirus.

Our clinical teams have reviewed all patients waiting for procedures and we are pleased to be able to start scheduling more people for planned procedures. We have put many measures in place to make sure that all patients are protected from the virus and would like to reassure you that your procedure can be done safely.

This leaflet will guide you through your visit to the dental clinic during the coronavirus pandemic.

Please note that the guidance in this leaflet may change at short notice in response to national or local developments during the coronavirus pandemic.

Coronavirus in the South West

We have all been asked to stay at home for a long time so it is understandable that leaving your home, even for something as important as going to hospital, can be a worry.

The spread of coronavirus has been different across the country and the South West has had some of the lowest numbers of cases and deaths. In turn, North Devon and Torridge have had some of the lowest numbers in the South West.

The safety of patients and staff is our top priority, so despite these low numbers, we want to reassure you that we have put in place a range of measures to keep everyone safe from coronavirus.

- We are practising good hand hygiene and are cleaning all areas frequently
- We are wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) to protect staff and patients

- We are supporting staff and patients to be socially distant in communal spaces such as waiting rooms and corridors
- We are asking people to follow the guidance in this leaflet

Before your procedure

Before your appointment we will ask you to have a coronavirus antigen test ('swab test') and to self-isolate to ensure everyone's safety.

Swab test

You will be asked to have a swab test, **which we will arrange**. You can read more about swab tests at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/get-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/>

Self-isolation

It is really important that you reduce the likelihood of catching coronavirus before your dental appointment. **To reduce your risk as much as possible, we will ask you to self-isolate as soon as you have had your swab test until your dental appointment.**

The guidance for self-isolating is similar to the government guidance for people who have coronavirus or live with someone who has coronavirus.

This means that you:

- Stay at home for the whole time
- Do not go shopping or to work or attend any gatherings, including outdoor gatherings or those in private spaces
- Do not use public transport
- Strictly avoid contact with anyone who has symptoms of coronavirus
- You may attend other necessary medical appointments during this period.

Checking for Coronavirus symptoms

The day before your appointment we will phone you to check if you have any potential Coronavirus symptoms. Please make sure you are contactable by phone.

We will check with you whether you have:

- A new continuous cough
- A high temperature
- Altered or loss of sense of taste or smell

It is really important that you tell us if you have any symptoms, as your risk of complications may be higher if you have coronavirus. We will need to reschedule your procedure if we have concerns that you might have coronavirus when you are due to come into the clinic, but we will make sure that it is re-booked as soon as possible. Please make us aware when we phone you if you are arriving by public transport or walking to your appointment.

When you arrive

Please arrive on time for your appointment but do not arrive too early.

On the day of your procedure, please wait in your car until we phone you to tell you we are ready to see you. We will ask you for the best mobile number to contact you on when we book your appointment.

Please attend your appointment alone wherever possible. If you are attending an appointment with your child, please do not bring any other children with you to the appointment.

Once we tell you to come into the clinic, you should enter the building by the main entrance. **You will be asked to use the hand gel provided and put on a face mask.**

The clinic is situated on the 3rd floor. Before you enter the dental clinic your temperature will be checked and you will be asked again if you have had any symptoms of coronavirus.

During and after your procedure

You will be asked to continue wearing a mask during your appointment apart from a short time during your dental treatment. You will be asked to put a mask back on whilst you leave the clinic and building.

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern call 01271 314090 or email ndht.pals@nhs.net

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

'Care Opinion' comments forms are available online at
www.careopinion.org.uk

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