

How to keep safe while you visit your dentists?

A Letter from Dr Lawrence Lai to our existing and potential valued patients on May 12, 2020

I hope all of you have been staying safe and doing well during the last few months. It has been a tough time for all of us, but I believe with our strong minds and hard work, we will be able to stay safe and get through this pandemic together. Since Canada has been doing quite well, I would like to announce that Beddington Dental started seeing patients since the week of May 5th for urgent dental needs, and our dentists will be able to provide all types of treatment by May 12th onwards. Richmond Dental in the SW will be open by June 1st and Sonata Dental in Airdrie will be open by June 8th. While all our dentists are allowed to provide full dental services to our patients, our hygiene team, however, is only allowed to perform limited procedures starting May 19. For example, teeth cleaning will be allowed with hand instruments only. The use of the ultrasonic Cavitron scaling machine is not allowed because it produces more saliva splatter than using only hand instruments. But don't worry, our hygienists are still able to do a thorough cleaning with hand instruments.

I would like to inform you that even though our clinics have been closed for about 2 months, our team has never stopped working. Indeed we have been working around the clock to update our knowledge and understanding to keep abreast of the latest development of this pandemic. This scope of work covers anything from following up the government policy, our dental association and college's regulations, and securing the medical equipment and supplies that are in high demand and suffering severe shortage around the world etc.

In addition, as some of you who have had urgent dental needs and did receive treatments and care from us in the past two months may already found out that we have never abandoned our patients' needs throughout the lockdown. My cell phone has been made accessible to all our patients and from patients referred to us from other dental clinics for any dental emergencies. I wanted to make sure that people in our communities could still get access to basic dental needs during this pandemic.

Personally I have been in constant communication with all other dental colleagues in our team to discuss the latest information available to us so that we can implement the safest measures, scientifically based, to our clinics.

As a dentist myself, I have been actively connecting to different dental groups nationwide and internationally through the internet on a daily and hourly basis in the last two months. I have been reading through all the ideas, discussions, and scientific researches posted in professional discussion groups such as Alberta Dentists Network (950 dentists), Vancouver Dental Professionals (3200 members), Toronto Dentists and Dental Specialists (1200 dentists) and an American dental network that comprised of more than 23,000 dental professionals, and among other international dental groups. After having gathered all the information and ideas, and after frequent discussions back and forth with some well-informed professionals, a highly comprehensive game plan has been custom designed to maximize the safety protection according to the settings of each of our clinics. This plan has incorporated a practical and a safe approach for our staff and patients way beyond the guidelines that Alberta Dental Association and College mandates. It has not been an easy task both intellectually and financially for us. However, strive for the best and the safest environment for our patients as well as our staff has always been my top priority. I am proud to announce here, with our hard work we have been able to secure all the necessary supplies and equipment that are in high demand everywhere around the world.

Below are some of the details that I would like to share with you so you are aware of what to expect and how you will be protected when you come to our offices in the coming months.

1. Safety for our staff and our patients is our priority. Before we can see you in person, we will ask you some questions on the phone about your dental concerns. More importantly, we will ask you a short questionnaire to rule out any potential Covid-positive patients coming to our clinics. Then we will give you some instructions about the physical distancing policy before you come in to your appointments. Please try your best to abide by the rules. I advise you to book your appointments by phone or on our websites first instead of doing it in person.

2. Our clinics have installed many air purifiers. The ones that we purchased are some of the best quality and most powerful units in the market.

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3. After extensive research, our clinics have implemented a new kind of disinfectant called **Hypochlorous Acid (HOCl) solution**: it is a much more potent disinfectant towards viruses than bleach but harmless to any surfaces, with negligible smell if there is any, and is even safe to ingest (not that you need to). Its use is approved by FDA and Health Canada. All our treatment rooms will be sprayed and wiped thoroughly using this HOCl solution between appointments. Our waiting room, washrooms, staff room and reception area etc will be regularly sanitized with this HOCl. Below is the video to show you how this HOCl was used by a dental clinic and an implant manufacturing facility in Korea where and when they were the epicentre of the Covid-19.

https://youtu.be/TFB_Kt8fW9c

Here is some other industries adopting this solution as disinfectant.

<https://vikingpure.com/blog/testimonials/>

4. **Special PPE (personal protective equipment):**

Please don't be alarmed when you see our clinical dental team wearing some extra protective masks and face shields and gowns while treating you in the rooms. They are required to provide extra protection to our staff and patients alike as mandated by the Alberta Dental Association and College. Just think about Star Wars 😊

5. **Sneeze Guards and wearing masks:** We have incorporated some clear guards on the reception counter so please stand behind it when you are talking to our team at the reception desk. When you come for your appointments, please wear

a mask. If you don't have one on arrival, we will give you one to wear. You will be asked to wear the mask before and after you are seated in the dental chair.

Please note that some of the above preparations are above and beyond meeting the requirements of the Alberta Dental Association and College and Health Canada. Even though the current financial condition for the business is under high stress, we still want to let our staff and our valued patients know that keeping everybody safe has always been our top priority throughout all times. To meet the minimal requirements mandated by the Alberta Dental Association and College, every dental clinic has incurred a considerable office expense at this moment. With this added expenses, it will be justifiable for dental clinics to pass the expenses to their clients. **As far as I know, many dental clinics, if not majority of them, in Canada and USA have planned to raise their dental fees or are implementing a surcharge of \$20-40 for each dental appointment to offset these extra expenses.** However, after careful consideration, I have decided to **keep our fees unchanged and still follow the current Alberta Dental Fee Guide.** We all understand that most Albertans are under tremendous financial strain because of this pandemic and our historic low economy. Our dental team has decided to go through this difficult time with our patients together. Please be assured that you are still well taken care of with your safety and financial situation in our mind.

Lastly we want to take this opportunity to share with you our clinic vision statement: **"A leading Dental Group that provides patients with high quality of professional skills, best customer service, and affordable means to access the most up-to-date dental treatments."**

Our team is looking forward to seeing you and I believe challenges and crises will only make us stronger and braver.

Meanwhile please stay safe and enjoy some quality time with your family, I am sure everyone is trying to make the best out of a very difficult situation. I, along with my team look forward to seeing you soon.

Kindest regards,

Dr Lawrence Lai and Beddington, Richmond and Sonata Dental Team