

## **Safety Measures in Our Practice**

- . 1 Training and Educating Our Team
- . 2 Recommendations for Our Team
- . 3 Patient Interviews and Social Distancing
- . 4 Measures Upon Arrival
- . 5 Measures Taken Upon Patient Entry to the Clinic
- . 6 Reception Room and Front Desk Safety Measures
- . 7 Protocols of the Clinical Team
- . 8 Patients in the Operatory
- . 9 Protocols After the Clinical Treatment

# 1 Training and Educating Our Team

One of the most important things we are doing during this time is to train and educate our staff.

- Our team has had refresher training in proper hand washing techniques. This may seem basic. However, it is the most important thing we can do to prevent the spread of the virus yet research shows that it is often poorly complied with and usually not done well. Consequently, we have spent a lot of time ensuring that our team does it well and often, especially before and after every patient encounter.
- They have practiced the appropriate use of personal protective equipment (PPE) prior to caring for a patient to prevent contamination.
- We have everyone in the office take their temperature at the beginning of every day and we will immediately send home anyone with an elevated temperature (100.4 degrees and above).
- Limit the numbers of staff providing their care to facilitate social distancing within the office and among other team members.
- We have created a specific checklist of recommendations for our team to follow so that they arrive to work healthy and go home to their families without worry (see Checklist of Recommendations for our Team).

## 2 Recommendations for Our Team

### Before coming to work

- Remove watch and rings and leave at home.
  - Tie hair up, keep nails short.
  - Avoid extra accessories.
  - If bringing a lunch, place in disposable wrapping.
- Bring work clothes in a washable bag (i.e. pillow case).

## **At work**

- Change into scrubs and work shoes as soon as you arrive.
- Use PPE as appropriate.
- Leave all clutter (pens, phones, etc.) outside of patient op rooms.
- We discourage workers from using other workers phones, desks, offices and other work tools and equipment when possible.
- Clean phone handset after use using UVC light within the office.
- Discourage cell phone use at work.

## **After work**

- Wash hands and arms with soap.
  - Remove scrubs and place in your take home bag for washing.
- Wash hands and put clean clothes on. Leave office shoes at office.
  - Sanitize phone, glasses, etc.
  - Wash hands again.

## **At home**

- Do not touch anything.
  - Wash scrubs in washing machine with detergent and hot water.
- Shower immediately before touching anything (including loved ones).

## **3 Patient Interviews and Social Distancing**

**Before patient arrival every effort is made to:**

- Filter patients during the phone call when scheduling appointments for care using established and recommended screening checklists.

- Reschedule patients who describe having any concerning warning signs or elevated temperature.
- Instruct patients to call ahead and reschedule their appointment if they develop symptoms of a respiratory infection (e.g., cough, sore throat, or fever) on the day they are scheduled to be seen.

## **To promote social distancing**

- Prioritize high risk patients (immune compromised, over 60, etc.) with early morning appointments so less contact with other people.
- When booking patients, we are spreading out the schedule so there are less people in the waiting room. Never triple book!
- If a patient is being accompanied, their escort should wait in the car, if possible, to limit the number of people in the waiting room and promote social distancing.
- Utilizing the back lobby as an additional parent/patient waiting room.

## **Safety measures taken upon arrival**

- Limit points of entry to the clinic.
- Leave office door open to avoid contact with door handles.
- Post visual alerts (e.g., signs, posters) at the entrance door advising patients of the COVID-19 risk and advising them not to enter the facility when ill.
- Masks and tissues, as well as touchless sanitizer are made accessible immediately upon entry.
- Provide supplies such as alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) with 70% alcohol, tissues and no-touch receptacles for disposal, at the entrance, in waiting rooms and at front desk.

## **4 Measures Upon Arrival Of Patients**

- Immediately use the hand sanitizer at the front entrance.
- Asked verbally (prior phone interview suggested) about the presence of

symptoms of a respiratory infection and history of travel or contact with possible COVID-19 patients.

- Assessed for respiratory symptoms and fever (with an ear or digital infrared forehead thermometer) and they will be asked to sign a health declaration form/questionnaire. This is done while the front personnel is wearing a mask, as they must cross over the front counter, if necessary.
- If temperature greater than 100.4°F or respiratory symptoms are present, they will be advised to seek medical treatment and their visit will be rescheduled.
- As testing for the virus becomes more available, we will be incorporating this added benefit to screen patients.

## **5 Measures Taken Upon Patient Entry into the Clinic**

- If an examination room is not readily available, ensure social distancing in the waiting room by placing seating a minimum of 6ft. apart and limit the amount of people in the reception area. Proceed to back lobby area.
- Remove all clutter and anything that is not readily disinfected from the waiting room (magazines, area rugs, pillows, toys, etc.).
- Frequent wipe down of waiting rooms, bathrooms, door handles, tables, light switches, computers, etc.

## **6 Reception Room and Front Desk Safety Measures**

- Headset use is encouraged by front desk team members so they are hands-free and only person uses it.
- Assistants are responsible for patient flow and will sanitize all heavily touched areas in the back after patient encounters and every hour. Front office personnel are responsible for hourly sanitization of all countertops and desks and pens used by patients. More frequently than an hour is

even better.

## **7 Protocols of the Clinical Team**

### **Hand hygiene is performed by our staff**

- Before and after all patient contact, contact with potentially infectious material, and before putting on and after removing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), including gloves.
- After removing PPE in order to remove any pathogens that might have been transferred to bare hands during this removal process.
- Washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

### **Personal Protective Equipment**

- Wear PPE (N95 mask, gloves, eye protection, face shield, gown, booties, etc.)
- Each personnel using the N95 masks must keep a large ziplock bag labeled Monday through Friday with their name on it. After the use of any mask, it is placed in the bag respectively. Each day's use can be used a week later as it is considered sterile again, according to the CDC after 3 days of nonuse. This will be a consolidated effort to conserve the masks.

### **Eye Protection**

- Put on eye protection (i.e., protective glasses or a disposable face shield that covers the front and sides of the face) upon entry to the patient room or clinical area.
- Re-usable eye protection (protective glasses, surgical loupes) must be cleaned and disinfected utilizing proper germicidal wipes prior to re-use.

### **Gloves**

- Put on clean, non-sterile gloves upon entry into the patient room or care

area.

- Change gloves if they become torn or heavily contaminated during a patient encounter.
- Remove and discard gloves when leaving the patient room or care area, and immediately perform hand hygiene.



## Gowns

- Put on clean, isolation gown upon entry into the patient room or area.
- Change the gown if it becomes soiled. The gowns are autoclavable and should be sterilized after each day, or immediately if soiled.
- Gowns should be prioritized for all aerosol-generating procedures and during activities where splashes and sprays are anticipated.

## 8 Patients in the Operatory

- Health care personnel (HCP) should strictly follow basic infection control practices between patients (e.g., hand hygiene, cleaning and disinfecting shared equipment).

- Limit transport and movement of the patient outside of the room. The office restroom is strictly for employees. Please instruct the patient to use the building restroom and to use hand sanitizer upon exit and reentry into the operatory.
- No other team member should enter the room during a procedure and, if necessary, should use PPE as described above.
- Room doors should be kept closed except when entering or leaving the room, and entry and exit should be minimized. Leave patient chart in the plastic bin outside the operatory.
- Once the patient has left the surgical operatory, the room should undergo appropriate cleaning and surface disinfection before it is returned to routine use.
- Special precautions will be taken when performing Aerosol Generating Procedures (AGP).
- HVE will be used for all aerosol producing procedures.

## **9 Protocols After the Clinical Treatment**

- All non-disposable medical equipment used for patient care should be cleaned and disinfected according to manufacturer's instructions.
- Ensure that environmental cleaning and disinfection procedures are followed consistently and correctly.
- Routine cleaning and disinfection procedures (e.g., using cleaners and water to pre-clean surfaces prior to applying an EPA-registered , hospital-grade disinfectant to frequently touched surfaces or objects for appropriate contact times as indicated on the product's label) are appropriate for SARS-CoV-2 in healthcare settings, including those patient-care areas in which aerosol generating procedures are performed.

### **At the End of the Day**

- We will wipe down all surfaces that are heavily touched (ie. Door handles, reception desk, etc.)

● Our commercial cleaning technicians have been instructed and updated on these infection control guidelines.

I have read and understood all protocol recommended.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_