

03/18/2020

COVID-19 and the Dental Practice

Dear Colleagues,

We all would agree that we are living in extremely difficult times. In just a short time frame, we have seen COVID-19 affect us personally, emotionally and financially; I am sure there are only a handful of global events that have spanned across every part of our lives like this virus. In my nearly 33 years in dentistry, I have seen extremely disruptive financial, political and personal events which have proven to be very unsettling, but nothing can compare to the disruptive nature of this virus.

The never-ending stream of information, both accurate and inaccurate has clouded reality and greatly altered the ability to make clear decisions. We are seeing extreme behavior at the grocery store and the coffee shop. What is considered "safe" social interaction? What is appropriate? What is inappropriate?

This environment of uncertainty has also spilled over into our practices and the extremely intimate nature of our profession. I have seen colleagues continue to take extraordinary precautions to protect their patients and staff; precautions I know that happen every day. We need to continue to educate our patients that they are receiving care in a protected environment and interacting with a profession that has always prided itself on being extremely safe. We already know how to ensure that cross-contamination is minimized in our offices; now is the time to ensure that our patients are fully aware that they are receiving care that is as safe as possible.

We have seen that patients are not comfortable keeping their elective appointments in the near term, so it is vital that we communicate openly with those patients still seeking palliative care to minimize no-shows and cancellations.

While this virus is a global-changing event, I am confident that we will be stronger as a result and more united in combating situations like this in the future. I, and the team at Carestream Dental, are here to help in any way we can at this time.

Sincerely,

Ed Shellard