

FIVE HEARTS DENTAL

REOPENING POLICY AND PATIENT JOURNEY

INTRODUCTION

This policy has been created based on multiple updated sources from within the dental and medical professions and the government.

It outlines modifications to our normal procedures that we intend to employ once the practice can be reopened.

It is not known at this time whether these procedures are temporary or whether they will become a permanent feature of the way dental practices must be run to ensure patient and staff safety in the future.

The worldwide COVID-19 pandemic is still being evaluated and studied and policies and recommendations are likely to change in line with new scientific evidence over time.

We would like to thank all of our patients for their patience and forbearance during the period of temporary practice closure and for their understanding and cooperation whilst we implement new measures at the practice.

We will of course be providing dental care to all of our patients in the safest possible environment. We greatly appreciate your assistance with any new or modified procedures at the practice.

PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE

We are delighted to inform you that we will be reopening our practice on 08/06/2020

We have taken all necessary preventive measures to ensure that you will be looked after in an environment that prioritizes your safety above all else.

Our reopening will be gradual and phased. We will still not be able to undertake any Aerosol Generating Procedures (AGPs) until further guidance from our governing and regulatory bodies is received. Our face to face appointments will initially be limited to temporary fillings and simple extractions if required, and we still have the ability to refer you to an Urgent Dental Centre if anything more complex is needed.

Please note that we will not be booking routine examinations or routine treatment appointments in this initial stage.

We are currently in the process of re triaging patients who have contacted us in the last 10 weeks with dental problems. Upon reopening, we will prioritise appointments based on:

- the urgency of treatment required
- the needs of vulnerable patients
- our capacity to undertake treatment based on new/enhanced protocols

To ensure workplace safety, these appointments will proceed in a slightly different way.

We will request that all patients who are attending the practice update their standard medical history forms beforehand. These forms will now be in electronic format and we will no longer be using paper forms. You can download the medical history form, using the following link:

<https://www.fiveheartsdental.co.uk/patient-information-downloads>

Please email this completed document to the practice at **contact@fiveheartsdental.co.uk**, before your appointment.





BEFORE ATTENDING THE PRACTICE

To ascertain the urgency and level of treatment needed the following risk category table will be used:

- Category 1 - Patients who are possible or confirmed COVID-19 patients – including patients with symptoms, or those living in their household
- Category 2 - Patients who are shielded – those who are at most significant risk from COVID-19
- Category 3 - Patients who are vulnerable / at increased risk from COVID-19
- Category 4 - Patients who do not fit one of the above categories

We will currently be providing care for patients in Categories 2, 3 and 4 only.

Pertinent points to be checked when re triaging: (This will be done via phonecall)

A) Covid-19 symptoms – new continuous cough, high temperature of 37.8°C or over or a change or loss in your normal sense of taste or smell. We will also ask if you have had a Covid-19 test.

If you are symptomatic you cannot be seen as we are a 'cold' site

B) Medical history and medications list– ideally emailed to the practice

C) Dental history – Detailed dental history of the presenting problem, to gather as much information as possible. The aim of this is to establish some sort of provisional diagnosis and advise you of the likely direction of treatment so that you are prepared.

D) Social history - Mobility problems, with stairs, wheelchair or assisted walking, sight
Home circumstances – who is likely to bring you to the appointment and what support they have at home.

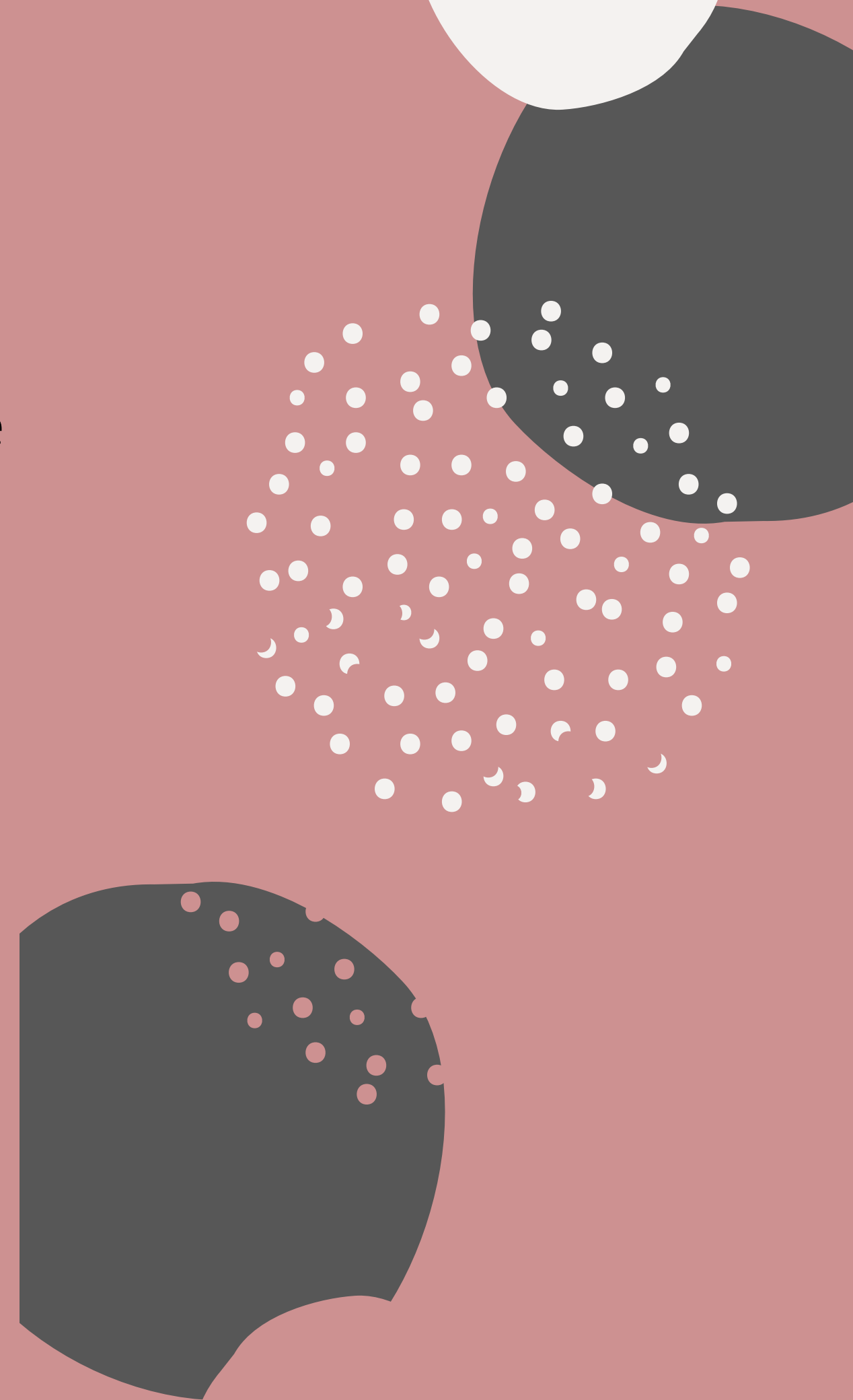
If we feel that you are at risk of having possibly been infected, even if you are asymptomatic, we will respectfully request for you to delay any treatments with us for at least one month.

If you are in a high risk group and do require treatment we will schedule your appointment at the beginning of the day.

To find out whether you are in a high or very high-risk group, please see the link [here](#)

Five Hearts Dental will be operating contactless payment systems going forwards, where possible or we will request that payment over the phone for your appointment prior to you attending, if you do not have a means of making contactless payment at the time of your visit.

This reduces the requirement for unnecessary contact or use of pin entries on card terminals at reception.





ARRIVING AT THE PRACTICE

As you are approaching the practice, please and call notify the reception team. When we are ready to receive you, a member of the reception team will call you back and ask you to wait outside the practice, and we will let you in. We cannot accept liability for personal items so please limit what you bring into the building.

Please be on time, and if you are early please wait in your car until the team is ready. If you are later than 15 minutes and have failed to inform us, you could be turned away and have your appointment rescheduled.

Please attend your appointment alone, as we will not be able to use the waiting area facilities in reception.

If you are bringing a child or vulnerable adult to their appointment, please ensure only one adult attends with the patient.



We will take your temperature with a no-touch thermometer. If your temperature is above 37.8°C, you will be unable to enter the practice and will be asked to return home and self-isolate as per current government guidelines.

If your temperature is below this, you will then be offered hand sanitiser and we will hand you PPE (gloves) and ask you to keep these on, until you leave the practice. We kindly ask that you keep your hands clasped and not touch anything, including stair railings on your way up to the surgery.

We will direct you straight to the surgery and request that you do the following before or during your appointment:

- We may ask you to use a Hydrogen Peroxide mouthwash before some dental treatments are provided
- Rubber dam and high volume suction will be used for more procedures than previously.

Please note that you will be unable to use the toilets in the practice, in accordance with current guidelines



PRACTICE PROCEDURES

The Five Hearts Dental team have spent time critically looking at every aspect of the practice with a view to removing all non-essential items that can potentially be the cause of infection.

You will find that the practice may appear to be quite bare when you attend.

All clinical and common areas including door handles and surfaces will be regularly disinfected in addition to our normal surface cleaning protocols between patients.

We will be providing a buffer period between patients to allow additional time for additional decontamination procedures, to allow for any treatment overruns and allow preparation time for the next patient so that they do not need to wait in the reception area.

All future appointments will be made and confirmed by telephone to limit your time spent at reception.

We apologise in advance for the necessary reduction in social interaction that this will necessitate. Whilst our masks may make us appear impersonal and distant, please be assured we are still the same friendly team underneath it all!

This document will be amended as the guidelines change.





NEW MEASURES TO REDUCE THE RISK OF COVID-19 TRANSMISSION

Our normal cross-infection control protocols at Five Hearts Dental against all previously known pathogens are already woven into all clinical activity carried out at the practice.

It should be remembered that a dental practice is already a very clean environment compared to public areas and there is no evidence of COVID-19 transmission occurring in increased rates in dentists or their staff.

We have collectively evaluated all of the updated guidance and observed what measures have been put in place in other countries. We feel that the measures which are outlined in this policy will reduce risk to the minimum level at the practice.

Please be assured that all of our clinical staff will also be complying with our updated procedures to reduce the risk of cross infection in both directions.



SUMMARY

The vast majority of our patients are otherwise healthy without coronavirus infection and we are confident that we are able to provide dental care for these patients in as normal an environment as possible while bearing in mind our responsibilities to mitigate risks of infection spread as far as is practically possible.

This policy will be constantly reviewed and updated as necessitated by circumstances over time.

If you have any questions regarding this policy or about your dental care at Five Hearts Dental please do not hesitate to contact us on contact@fiveheartsdental.co.uk