



# How to Maintain Good Oral Health During the 2020 Corona Virus Pandemic

## *and What to Do in Case of a Dental Emergency*

Staying at home and practicing good hygiene are important things you can do to keep yourself and others healthy during the coronavirus outbreak. Unless you have a dental emergency, you should not visit a dental office or clinic during the coronavirus pandemic.

### **Do the Following to Maintain Good Oral Health:**

- Take care of your mouth. Brush your teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste, brush your tongue, and floss once a day. Brush your children's teeth too.
- For children under age 3, use a smear (rice size amount) of fluoride toothpaste to brush their teeth. For children ages 3 to 6, use a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste.

### **Appointments for the following oral health services should be rescheduled:**

- Oral exams or cleanings
- Adjusting braces or having braces put on
- Treatment for cavities that are not painful
- Removal of teeth that are not painful

### **Examples of dental emergencies**

- Severe tooth pain (not minor pain)
- Painful swelling in the gums, face, or neck
- Bleeding in your mouth that does not stop
- Oral injury such as a broken, loose, or knocked-out permanent tooth

### **If You Think You Have a Dental Emergency**

Most dental offices and clinics are providing emergency care only. Some are temporarily closed but have a dentist on call to treat emergencies.

**Do not go the emergency room.** Many hospitals are overwhelmed with coronavirus patients at this time, and you are unlikely to get treatment because priority is being given to people with severe cases of the virus.

If you don't have a regular source of oral health care, you can find an oral health professional by

- Asking your Head Start program staff for a referral
- Contacting your local or state health department (<https://www.astd.org/state-programs>)
- Searching the following websites
  - American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, Find a Pediatric Dentist (<https://www.aapd.org/publications/find-a-pd>)
  - American Dental Association, Find-a-Dentist (<https://findadentist.ada.org>)
  - Health Resources and Services Administration, Find a Health Center (<https://findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov>)
  - Insure Kids Now, Find a Dentist (<https://www.insurekidsnow.gov/coverage/find-a-dentist/index.html>)