

What about the new coronavirus?

With so many news stories, it's understandable to be concerned about the new coronavirus that causes COVID-19. Please know that the precautions your dentist already takes every day to prevent the spread of infection in his or her practice also helps prevent the spread of COVID-19.

If you are ill with flu-like symptoms, you should reschedule your appointment.

If you or someone you are in close contact with have recently traveled to one of the countries with large outbreaks of COVID-19 (China, Italy, Iran, South Korea) or if you have been exposed to someone else who was diagnosed with COVID-19 or who was quarantined as a precaution, wait 14 days until you see your dentist to make sure you have not caught the coronavirus.

If you are healthy, there's no need to cancel your regularly scheduled dental appointment.

It's important to know that the majority of people infected with the coronavirus experience flu-like symptoms and then recover. Most people do not develop serious respiratory complications.

Those most at risk of becoming seriously ill are elderly people and those with underlying medical conditions such as diabetes and kidney disease, among others. Children, thus far, have been largely unaffected.

Here are a few things you can do on your own to help keep yourself and those around you healthy:

- **Wash your hands frequently**, or use a hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent ethyl alcohol.
- **Avoid touching your face, eyes or nose** to reduce the spread of germs.
- **Cover your cough or sneeze with your elbow.** Infections like the coronavirus spread through the tiny droplets in coughs and sneezes.
- **Stay home if you feel sick.** If you have flu-like symptoms or otherwise feel unwell, stay home and rest. Call your dentist to reschedule your appointment for a later date. This will reduce the risk of spreading your illness.

Visit [the CDC's website](#) for the latest information on COVID-19.