



valleyDENTALhealth

SAFETY protocols



Dear VDH Family -

We are proud that our safety and infection control protocols have always met and exceeded guidelines as set by the CDC, ADA, OSHA and state safety and health agencies. At Valley Dental Health, we prioritize safety for our team, our patients, and anyone else who enters our dental home.

In light of the current COVID-19 pandemic, we have added to our usual stringent practices as well as revised and refined existing protocols. This document outlines the protocols that reflect the changes and upgrades we are implementing to keep everyone safe and healthy. We hope you will find it useful.

See you soon!

Ashley & Roham

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IMPORTANT - If you are experiencing any of the symptoms of any respiratory illness, you are urged to stay at home.

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1. General Safety Protocols

- * Proper hand washing is the best way to prevent the spread of most infections, including COVID-19. Wash your hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with soap and water. Dry your hands using a clean towel or cloth, and use your towel to turn off the water supply. The CDC offers guidance on proper technique at (<https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html>).
- * An alternative method is utilizing an alcohol-based hand sanitizing solution with at least 60% alcohol concentration. The same technique and 20 second guideline should still be utilized.
- * **IMPORTANT:** All VDH team members will be re-trained in proper hand washing technique, and will be required to perform hand hygiene upon arrival to the office, before and after each patient encounter, upon exiting the restroom, and prior to leaving for the day. Additionally, hand hygiene must be performed at any time during the day that potential contamination is suspected.
- * **IMPORTANT:** All patients will be required to perform hand hygiene upon arrival and upon dismissal, as well as at any time that potential contamination is suspected.
- * Proper usage of PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) - including but not limited to masks, respirators, gloves, jackets/gowns, head coverings, neck coverings, shoe coverings and face shields - will be utilized as deemed necessary and in accordance with established recommendations.
- * Every person entering the office will be screened daily with a forehead temperature scan. Anyone who refuses the temperature scan or presents with a body temperature of 100.4°F or higher, will be sent home for the safety of everyone. We will, of course, honor a relaxed rescheduling policy in light of this safety measure.
- * Every person entering the office will be screened daily with a questionnaire. If any risk factors are suspected, follow-up questions may be required and you may be sent home for the safety of everyone. Our relaxed rescheduling policy will again be honored for these cases.

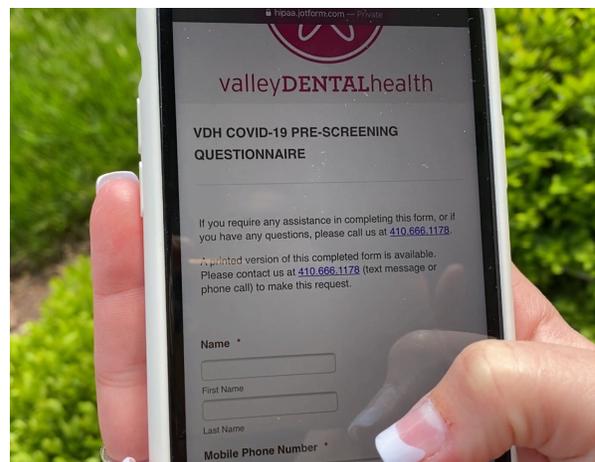


2. Team Safety Guidelines

- * Every team member will be screened daily with a forehead temperature scan. If you are found to have a body temperature of 100.4°F or higher, or if you refuse a temperature scan, you will be sent home for the safety of everyone.
- * Every team member is expected to immediately report any signs and/or symptoms that could be related to COVID-19, including but not limited to respiratory symptoms, GI symptoms, loss of smell and/or taste, fever, and/or flu-like symptoms. Additionally, every team member is expected to immediately report any symptoms that could be related to COVID-19 that are being experienced by any family members or anyone with whom the team member has had direct contact. In these cases, the affected team member will be asked to stay at home for the safety of others.
- * Team members are expected to keep countertops clear of personal items, knick-knacks, and other items so that all countertops can be regularly wiped down with disinfectants.
- * Team members are expected to have excellent personal hygiene habits, including but not limited to tying hair back, cutting fingernails short and keeping them clean, and conforming to proper hand hygiene.
- * If you choose to keep an additional pair of shoes or any additional clothing at the office, it will be your responsibility to keep these items away from others' personal property.
- * Cell phones should be kept away from patient treatment areas, cleaned regularly, and kept in a plastic bag. Cell phones should only be accessed during meal breaks and at the end of the workday.
- * Before leaving the office, team members must dispose of all single-use PPE appropriately, disinfect and/or sanitize any re-usable PPE, and perform thorough hand hygiene.
- * Outside of the office, all team members are expected to maintain social distancing and face covering regulations as set forth by the CDC and Maryland State Department of Health, and to follow any other recommendations aimed at limiting the spread of COVID-19.

3. Pre-Screening via Phone, Text, and Email

- * Before your appointment, we will call, text, and/or email you to confirm your appointment and review the COVID-19 screening questionnaire. Your answers will help us determine your risk of being infectious to others. If we find that your answers confirm that either you or a member of your household could be infected, we will assist you in rescheduling your appointment.
- * If you are required to complete a new medical history form or update your previous medical history form, these forms must be submitted electronically to our office before your arrival. If you need assistance with accessing or completing the forms, we are here to help. Reducing paper forms is very important in reducing the risk of spread of COVID-19.
- * Upon arrival to our office, the questionnaire will be repeated to ensure nothing has changed since it was first completed.
- * Any patients who are considered at high risk for COVID-19 - including but not limited to patients who are over the age of 65, who are



immunocompromised, or who have a history of cardiovascular disease - will be scheduled at times to maximize social distancing factor.

- * Every appointment has administrative tasks that need to be accomplished that would typically require pen and paper interactions. We are moving to a touch-free interaction system and will ask that you complete all administrative forms that we require at least 48 hours prior to your appointment. If any items are missing, we will most likely need to reschedule your appointment.

4. Patient Protocols in Reception/Non-Clinical Areas

- * If you have your own face mask or face covering, please bring it with you to the office and wear it as soon as you leave your vehicle.
- * Upon parking outside of our office, please call or text 410.666.1178 and remain in your car.
- * When your treatment room is ready for you, we will call or text you to inform you to leave your vehicle and enter the office.
- * Patients will be required to present to the office unaccompanied and enter the treatment room alone, except where absolutely necessary.
- * Patients will be required to wear a facial covering upon entering the office, and will be provided with one if necessary.
- * Patients are expected to maintain social distancing, when possible, at all times while in the office. During interactions with the front desk team, while being treated, or other times when social distancing is difficult to maintain, barriers such as clear partitions, face shields and masks must be utilized by all parties involved.
- * We will make every effort to stay on time for your appointment. However, please be aware that unexpected delays may occur. We kindly ask that you remain patiently in your vehicle until you are asked to enter, and keep any communications to phone calls and text messages.
- * When you enter our reception room, you will notice some changes aimed at ensuring a safe environment for everyone. We have eliminated magazines and brochures, reduced the seating area, and replaced upholstered seating options with wipeable plastic chairs. There will also be clear partitions on the reception desk and a large HEPA filter air purifier.
- * You will be asked to confirm the answers to your COVID-19 questionnaire upon arriving at our parking lot. Upon arrival in our reception room, your temperature will be taken and you will be given hand sanitizer for proper hand hygiene. Assistance on proper hand hygiene technique will be available as needed.
- * All transactions and payments will be finalized prior to entering the treatment room. Any anticipated prescriptions will be called in, and followup appointments will also be scheduled prior to entering the treatment room.



- * Upon dismissal, any additional payment and followup considerations will be finalized in our new checkout area. You will be dismissed utilizing the side exit next to the our new checkout area to avoid potential contamination of our common areas.
- * You will notice that common (non-treatment) areas will be wiped down after each patient interaction, similar to the way we disinfect treatment rooms before and after every patient.
- * The air and ALL surfaces of the reception area and all other designated “clean” areas will be disinfected twice daily with a hospital-grade disinfectant mist that is approved for emerging viral pathogens like SARS-CoV2. And it’s USDA Organic!!!
- * Clinical personel will not be permitted in non-treatment spaces unless all PPE is properly doffed.
- * Patients are discouraged from removing their phones from their pockets or purses to avoid contamination on the phone.

5. Patient Protocols in Clinical Areas

- * Patients will be escorted to treatment rooms once all disinfecting and cleaning protocols have been completed. You will be asked to remain in your vehicle until the treatment room is ready for you.
- * As part of our new safety measures, we have added air purifiers that contain true HEPA filtration systems in each treatment room, which will be running continuously throughout the day.
- * Additionally, we have implemented secondary high volume suction devices that will be utilized during all dental procedures in addition to the suction devices we had previously used.
- * Patients will be asked to rinse with 1.5% hydrogen peroxide as a pre-procedural rinse.
- * Re-usable equipment is disinfected and sterilized immediately, using guidelines set forth by the CDC and other governing agencies.
- * Patients will be asked to perform hand hygiene prior to leaving the treatment room, and will be urged to use disinfectant upon entering their vehicles to return home.
- * Patients are discouraged from removing their phones from their pockets or purses to avoid contamination on the phone.
- * The air and ALL surfaces in treatment rooms will be disinfected as needed with a hospital-grade disinfectant mist that is approved for emerging viral pathogens like SARS-CoV2. And it’s USDA Organic!!!



6. Additional Information

- * Our goal has always been to provide all of our patients with the highest quality care and customer service using the latest technologies in a safe, comfortable and non-judgmental environment, while at the same time maintaining and exceeding safety and health protocols.
- * Comfort is also important, so please note that waiting in your vehicle will feel different than waiting in a comfortable and homey space like VDH's reception room. Additionally, the facility will be cooler due to constant air purifier use and the need to keep the team cool under all that PPE! Please BYOB (Bring Your Own Blanket) if you know you tend to get cold...you can bring a pillow too!
- * As information and guidance surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic change, we are committed to following the latest guidelines and recommendations, and to modifying our protocols where necessary to ensure safety and compliance.
- * Your Valley Dental Health team strictly adheres to best and established health and safety practices, and compliance to these and any future changes is mandatory.

The Valley Dental Health Team loves our patients! The safety and security of the entire Valley Dental Health family is of the utmost importance, and we have always paid critical attention to implementing safety measures with this goal in mind. We are confident that our upgrades in equipment, protocols, procedures and policies will show you our level of commitment to mitigating the risk of transmitting diseases to our patients, team and families. Our sincere hope is that you also do YOUR part!

We will continue to work with our dental partners in ensuring that your dental care is seamless, efficient, and as comprehensive as you have come to expect from Valley Dental Health. All attempts will be made to minimize or eliminate non-essential visits by conducting as many non-treatment visits utilizing video conference and virtual platforms. We will also attempt to reduce the need for follow-up appointments by completing any recommended procedures on the same day, when possible.

To ensure your visit runs on time, please complete all relevant forms prior to arriving at the office using our online forms.

With your support and patience, we expect Valley Dental Health to rapidly return to a place of joy, vibrance, laughter, and hope. COVID-19 is going to change the way we look on the outside, but it won't change the love we have for all of you, and it won't change the attention and care with which you will be treated.

If you have any questions regarding any of the policies above, please feel free to reach out to us at info@valleydentalhealth.com.

Keep smiling, Valley Dental Health family!

