

Sanitation Guidelines and Best Practices for Risk Management in Your Practice

Keeping your practice open? These tips will help minimize risk for yourself, your staff and your patients.

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Cleaning

- **Give yourself an hour before arriving and your first appointment.** This will give you enough time to ensure proper cleaning of the entire office.
- **Use EPA-approved cleaners.** While we appreciate the desire to use natural cleaner, they do not always have what is needed to kill the virus. The cleaners must have chemicals [approved by the EPA](#). This list headed up by chlorine-based cleaners and 70% alcohol products. Four tsp. of household liquid chlorine per quart is recommended. Ammonia-based products are also listed.
- **Wear gloves while cleaning.** This is to protect yourself and your patients.
- **No-touch is best.** Provide no-touch waste receptacles in all areas of your office and exam rooms.

Sanitizing

- **Sanitize all equipment.** Make sure you clean **any** equipment that is used with **any** patient between seeing patients. This includes the adjusting tables, massage tables, hand tools used for treatment, doorknobs, faucet handles, light switches, bathrooms etc.
- **Mind the details.** Thoroughly disinfect door handles, light switches, counter tops, writing tools, faucet handles after each patient.
- **Washing hands with soap and water is critical.** Scrub for 20 seconds – simply sing “Happy birthday” twice. Provide and use single-use towels (not fabric).
- **Provide alcohol-based sanitizers that are 60 – 95% alcohol-based to patients and staff.** They should be at the reception desk and outside all treatment rooms. Staff should also use sanitizer prior to and after treating a patient.

Masks and Clothing

- **Consider spraying off doctors clothing** with Lysol on areas where there is contact such as when doing a side posture adjustment.
- **All DCs should be wearing a mask:** If an N-95 mask is not available use a surgical mask. Even [homemade masks](#) are better than no mask.
- **Consider providing masks to patients.** Even a primitive mask provides some protection.

Sign-Ins and Waiting Room

- **No paper sign-ins.** Your receptionist should check patients in on the computer rather than having them sign in. This minimizes touch to paper, clipboards, pens, etc.
- **If at all possible, avoid cross-scheduling.** One patient at a time ensures the lowest risk.
- **Discourage patients from bringing more than one person with them.**
- **Practice social distancing.** If you absolutely must have multiple patients in the lobby at the same time, force social distancing by positioning chairs six or more feet apart, and remove extra chairs or block them off.
- **Make a car “waiting room.”** Consider asking patients and their companions to wait in their individual cars until their appointment time.
- **Remove waiting room “extras.”** That includes reading material and magazines. For doctors that treat pediatrics, pull all toys, games, and books out of the waiting room. Clean and store them until this situation is stabilized. There may be a later recommendation to acquire new items, depending on what we learn about the virus.

For more ideas about preparing your workspace, [review these tips from OSHA](#).