



To all our patients

We hope that you and your family are in good health.

You may have heard that dental practices can open to routine care from Monday 8 June.

While our practices won't be open on the 8th, we will be opening very soon (hopefully June 10th for Somerton and June 15th for Street) but we just wanted to be clear that this will not be business as usual. The treatments you are offered may be different to those you received before, depending on staff and equipment available. It will take some time before services return to what you previously experienced as normal. Please be patient.

Initially, we will only be able to offer emergency treatment, without the use of high speed drills that are aerosol generating procedures. The guidelines from the Office of the Chief Dental Officer advise these "should be avoided if possible" and only "where the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment is available". Unfortunately, we are still unable to source the appropriate enhanced level of PPE due to national shortages.

The treatments that we will be able to offer, in the first instance, are:

- Temporary fillings
- Non-surgical Extractions
- Dentures

In the first instance these appointments will be prioritised in order of urgency and we will call those patients that have contacted us for emergency advice during our closure or have advised they have a dental problem. We will only be able to see a maximum of 7 patients per day, per dentist so it will take some time to see the all these patients. We will continue to offer telephone advice with a dentist to reduce the demand for face to face appointments. Routine appointments will not be available for some weeks; we will of course keep you updated.

If you had an appointment previously booked, these will be cancelled. We will contact you again to re-arrange these as soon as possible.

Our community has been through a lot over the last few months, and all of us are looking forward to resuming our normal habits and routines. While many things have changed, one thing has remained the same: our commitment to your safety.

Infection control has always been a top priority for our practice, and you may have seen this during your visits to our surgery. Our infection control processes are made so that when you receive care, it's both safe and comfortable. We want to tell you about the infection control procedures we follow in our practice to keep patients and staff safe.

Our practice follows infection control guidelines made by the governing bodies.

We are up-to-date on new guidance that has been issued. We do this to make sure that our infection control procedures are current and adhere to recommendations.

You may see some changes when it is time for your next appointment. We made these changes to help protect our patients and staff. For example:

- Our practice will communicate with you beforehand to ask some screening questions. You'll be asked those same questions again at your appointment
- We have hand sanitiser that we will ask you to use when you enter the practice. You will also find some in the reception area and other places in the practice for you to use as needed.
- We will take your temperature with a contactless digital thermometer
- We no longer offer magazines, children's toys and so forth, since those items are difficult to clean and disinfect
- Appointments will be managed to allow for social distancing between patients. That might mean that you're offered fewer options for scheduling your appointment.
- Once we are able to offer aerosol procedures, the dental team will look different as they will be wearing additional face protection. Please don't be concerned – it's still us underneath and we will try to make you feel as relaxed as possible.

We will do our best to allow greater time between patients to reduce waiting times for you, as well as to reduce the number of patients in the reception area at any one time.

How you can help:

- With the exception of children and patients with carers, patients should come alone
- A distance of at least 2 metres must be observed if another patient is present in the dental practice
- Payment should be made by card where possible – we will endeavour to take this in advance over the phone.
- Staff will not shake your hand
- If you show symptoms following appointment booking, you should contact the practice by phone
- Please do not arrive early to the practice. If necessary, you should wait outside the practice
- Please do not arrive without an appointment
- Patients should come wearing a mask if possible or be prepared to wear one.
- We would discourage you from using the toilet facilities unless absolutely necessary. Please advise a member of staff if you need use them.

We thank you for your continued patience and understanding.

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