

Aerosol Generating Procedures (AGPs)

Our new normal...

Due to the emergence of Covid19 we are having to fundamentally alter our ways of working to ensure the safety of you the patient and our team members. You will have already noticed changes in your journey through the practice, these are to ensure your exposure to the coronavirus is as low as possibly achievable. There is, however, something that we commonly use that poses a significant risk to us - **Aerosol Generating Procedures (AGPs)**

What are Aerosol Generating Procedures?

Anything that produces a mist or sprays small droplets, which then can float around in the air for some time, even after the procedure is finished. The aerosols are commonly produced by dental drills, ultrasonic teeth cleaning and even with our air syringe.



Why is that a risk? Virus particles are present in the saliva and bodily fluids of Covid19 sufferers before or even without symptoms. The virus is then picked up by the aerosol and spread into the air. The dental surgery team could then inhale it and receive a high viral load, which has sadly caused the death of a number of dentists caring for their patients. The aerosol particles can float around in the air for some time after the completion of the AGP.

What are the changes? Your dentist and nurse are going to look unrecognisable compared to before! Don't be alarmed! The additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is to stop you infecting us and vice versa. We will be wearing a respirator mask - which will make talking to you very difficult I'm afraid. We also will be wearing long sleeved gowns and visors together with the gloves we normally use. We will be using the highest protection possible, as recommended by the FGDP and BDA. The PPE may change over time as the recommendations evolve following research.

What other additional measures are we taking? We will perform as much treatment as possible under rubber dam isolation to minimise viral contamination of any aerosol produced. We will be using our normal high speed suction to capture as much aerosol as possible. The surgery windows

will be open to ensure good ventilation. We have installed HEPA air filtration units with UVC light to filter and kill circulating virus particles.

Aerosol Settling Following the AGP, as mentioned above, viral particles can remain airborne. They then settle with gravity and can then be killed using some special cleaning chemicals we will be using. We do, however, need to leave the surgery for a time for this to happen and the room has to remain empty.

After the Aerosol Settling We are then able to thoroughly dis-infect the surgery using chemicals that kill coronaviruses.

The Cost The additional extensive PPE together with the settling time have huge cost implications, all of which we cannot absorb. We are forced to add an additional AGP cost.

Diary Management We no longer have the flexibility we used to have of providing AGP treatments at any point of the day. We have had to sub-divide our diaries into sections. We hope you understand the reasons for this. We will have daily emergency sessions - but these must be booked. We are unable to see 'walk-in' patients due to the social distancing restrictions.

Prevention of AGP A lot of AGP is unavoidable unfortunately as we need to use it to help you fight gum disease or repair chipped teeth. However, we are still seeing new decays and gum disease and you definitely can help prevent this with good oral hygiene and low sugar diet.



From this...



...to this!