

23.3.2020

Dear Patient/Parent

Re: Response to Covid-19 pandemic for patients undergoing orthodontic treatment

We are writing to update you on our response to the Covid-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic. This is a rapidly changing situation but as of March 23rd the government has advised all individuals to limit social interaction in order to reduce the transmission of the virus. We have also received guidance from our Dental/Orthodontic bodies that no orthodontic patient should attend any clinic at this time. In an extreme emergency, the patient should contact the practice by phone and discuss ways of resolving their problem at home. Patients should be deterred from attending clinics for their own protection and that of the clinical staff.

As an organisation, we have taken the decision that the safest course of action at the current time is to temporarily suspend appointments for patients undergoing orthodontic treatment except for emergency/urgent appointments gone through triage. We have not taken this decision lightly, but in order to minimise the close personal contact that occurs in waiting rooms and in the surgeries in order to protect you, your relatives and staff.

If you/your child has an urgent problem which cannot wait please contact us using this email address: Info@oldhamorthodontics.co.uk or phone 0161 6220987 and we will organise a staff member to get in touch.

Urgent problems include anything causing:

- Significant pain/discomfort
- Broken fixed appliances (train-tracks) that are causing significant discomfort/pain (note that loose or lost brackets *do not* constitute an urgent problem unless you are in pain).
- If you are not sure whether your problem is urgent please use the same email address to contact us, providing a contact phone number.
- Please use orthodontic wax to cover areas causing a mild problem.

IMPORTANT NOTE

- **At present we are offering appointment to be seen for an emergency only if the patient has gone through phone/video triage.**
- **Please only attend this appointment if you are free of the symptoms of Coronavirus (ie. no persistent cough or high temperature)**
- specific guidance on when to isolate for 7 days versus 14 days can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-guidance-for-householdswith-possible-covid-19-infection>
- anyone with these symptoms who is WELL can stay at home and does not need to engage with NHS111 or be tested.
- anyone with these symptoms who is UNWELL should go to NHS111 online first for advice, rather than approaching their GP practice or pharmacy

You will no doubt be concerned about the implications of you or your child's treatment being suspended, and we understand this. Please be reassured that we will do our best to continue their treatment in a timely fashion once the pandemic is controlled.

There are some **important steps** you/your child can follow to ensure they get the best results from their treatment:

1. Please ensure you/they maintain the highest level of oral hygiene by brushing effectively at least twice a day and using small interdental/interspace brushes to clean behind the wires. Use a fluoride mouthwash once a day. Use his video for instruction: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DpxMwiLRQyY>
2. Please ensure you/they follow the necessary dietary restrictions: no fizzy drinks (including diet/sports drinks), no chewing gum, toffees or other sweets. Limit other sweet foods, such as biscuits and cakes/puddings to mealtimes.

In summary, please do **not** attend your next scheduled orthodontic appointment. If you have an urgent problem or would like some advice, please contact us using the email address above. If you do not hear from us continue to wear your brace as you have already been advised. If you have to attend an urgent appointment, please only do so if you are well and free of a cough or high temperature. Once the pandemic is over we will send you out a new appointment to continue your orthodontic treatment.

Regards,

Oldham Orthodontics