

Williamson Pediatric Dentistry Family,

Our team would like to thank you for your patience during the Covid-19 pandemic. We understand that dental care has had to be put on a pause for an indefinite amount of time, but we want you to know that it is still a priority! Our teeth and our mouths are a portal to the rest of our body, and play an integral role in our overall health and well-being. We are working diligently to provide creative ways to reschedule our patients in a timely fashion so that your child's oral health is not neglected. The oral health of our patients is of the utmost importance to us, and that's why I am writing this letter to you today.

Currently, guidelines set forth by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) have recommended the continuation of deferral of routine elective dental procedures, as well as the minimization of aerosol based procedures. However, our Governor and both state and local legislation have given us the green light to get back to work and start serving our patients again. In an effort to adhere to these recommendations and guidelines, in accordance with executive orders established by Governor Lee, we have developed a plan to address the needs of our patients.

We understand that many parents have children waiting for cleanings and exams at our office. In an effort to evaluate patients who are overdue for cleanings and ensure the presence or absence of disease, we have decided to implement "exam days". These days will be designed for us to see any patients who are currently due or overdue for cleanings. At these appointments, we will simply take radiographs (x-rays) of your child's teeth, screen your child's overall oral hygiene efforts, and then Dr. Drew will come and perform an examination on your child. Once the exam is complete, Dr. Drew will formulate a plan of action for each child, and options will be presented to you regarding your child's oral care. By doing this, we will be able to give you the peace of mind you need regarding the health of your child's mouth, and you will be able to make an informed decision on what you would like to do regarding your child's oral care. This will also allow us the ability to prioritize the need for dental care in our patients, so that we can address the most urgent dental needs as quickly as we are able to do so.

Options will include the following: (after radiographs and exam with Dr. Drew)

- 1) Defer cleaning for 6 months
  - a. This option will be presented to patients who have good oral hygiene, no noted dental disease, and a good past history of oral care.
- 2) Defer cleaning to a "hygiene day"
  - a. This can be done for either:
    - i. patients that have no dental disease noted but parents would still like their child to have a cleaning
    - ii. patients needing to return for other treatment, such as silver diamine fluoride or sealants.
- 3) Schedule cleaning with another "aerosol based procedure"
  - a. This option will be provided for children requiring fillings, crowns, or extractions. What we can do with this option is schedule your child's restorative or surgical appointment with an additional 10-15 minutes in length, and a cleaning can be provided during the procedure being performed for your child that day.

- 4) Cleaning the same day as exam
  - a. This option would be at the discretion of the dentist dependent on available team members present for patient care that day, and whether or not other patients have cancelled in that timeframe, allowing us the proper amount of time to work in a cleaning that day.

We want our families to also know that when Dr. Drew has performed an examination on your child and has verified the presence or absence of disease, your child can return for a cleaning with our office on a separate day and only be required to see the hygienist that day. This will allow for extra time in our schedule to see exclusively cleanings when Dr. Drew may not be physically present at the office. We will be opening our office with our hygienists only on certain days to provide additional hours of operation to facilitate in the rescheduling of somewhere close to 1000 patient appointments. These days will be on Fridays, as well as Thursdays that Dr. Drew is seeing patients in the operating room in Nashville. These days will be exclusively for cleaning appointments only.

In the interim, we have made a decision to not take any new patients unless they were already scheduled with our office prior to the CoVid-19 pandemic. This will allow us to fully focus on the needs of our established patients first! Once we are able to reschedule and get the majority of our patients back on a routine and normal schedule, we will open the schedule back up for new patient appointments again.

New office policies have also been implemented on an interim basis at our practice to reduce the risk of Covid-19 transmission. These changes will be made effective immediately upon reopening. These include:

- 1) Patients will call from car to check-in for appointments. No one will be allowed to remain in the waiting room after patient has been brought back for appointment and paperwork is completed.
- 2) We must have a form of electronic communication on file (email, cell phone number) as patient paperwork and consent forms will be completed online prior to your child's appointment to minimize traffic in waiting room and prevent cross contamination of Ipads.
- 3) Mandatory temperature screenings
  - a. These will be performed on all patients and parents entering the building. In addition, Dr. Drew and the team will also have temperature screenings every morning prior to patient care.
- 4) Covid-19 screening forms
  - a. Questions will be asked to determine your child's previous risk of exposure. If positive answers are obtained, it will be at the discretion of Dr. Drew to determine if your child can still be seen or if they will need rescheduled. This policy will be very firm to reduce the risk of Dr. Drew, the team, and other patients being inadvertently exposed to Covid-19.
- 5) Mandatory face coverings
  - a. If you have a mask for yourself and your child, we politely ask that you wear it to your appointment. If you do not have one available, one will be provided for you based off of availability of PPE.

- 6) Only patients allowed back for all appointments. (This is being done to minimize the amount of people in the office and to stay within the guidelines for social distancing as much as we are able to do so).
  - a. If parent must accompany child to visit, only ONE parent is allowed to come back and parent must wear a mask.
  - b. If siblings do not have appointments, we request that you find child care for them, as they will not be permitted in the back with the exception of a child fully dependent on parent for nutrition (nursing baby – bottle fed baby)
- 7) Aerosol reduction in office
  - a. Each area where aerosol based procedures are occurring will have doors closed during the procedure. In addition, these rooms will be equipped with UltraHEPA air filtration purifiers to minimize the amount of aerosol in the room and increase the clearance of aerosols both during and after the procedure is completed.
- 8) Personal protective equipment
  - a. Our team will be wearing additional PPE on a routine basis including masks, gloves, face shields, gowns, surgical caps or bonnets to reduce the potential for exposure to Covid-19. Our team will look a lot different to your child than they have in the past, so please make sure they are aware of this.

We love our family at Williamson Pediatric Dentistry, and we are incredibly excited to get back to work to serve the needs of our patients and their families!!!! We ask that you exhibit patience with us during this process, with the understanding that you are a priority to us and we are doing the best we can with the numbers of patients we have to reschedule. If it is going to be a few weeks to get back in, please do not get frustrated with our administrative team. They are just doing their jobs, and trying to sort out the chaos this pandemic has created with our patient schedule. They will do their best to reschedule you in a timely fashion dependent on the amount of team members present, what days or hours you are available, and whether or not further changes happen with executive orders from our governor. The health, safety, and well being of our patients is our number one priority, and we hope that the measures we are taking now will significantly decrease or eliminate the risk of Covid-19 becoming an issue at our practice. We thank you for your dedication and commitment to our practice, and we look forward to working with each family to establish a balance and new sense of normalcy with the practice. If you have a specific request regarding rescheduling, please contact us at [info4wpd@gmail.com](mailto:info4wpd@gmail.com), and we will contact you in the next few days to do our best to assist you. Stay home, stay safe, and we are excited to see all of your smiles again soon!

Sincerely,

Dr. Drew and the Crew at WPD