

COVID-19 and Dental Care

Information about seeing a dentist

Why should I see a dentist?

It is important to continue to see the dentist for preventive care and other dental needs. Oral health is linked to overall health and wellbeing. Taking care of your mouth helps the rest of your body.

When do I need to see a dentist?

Clinics can see patients for routine check-ups, cleanings, fillings, surgeries, and other dental care. Call your dentist ahead of time to schedule an available appointment. Dentists continue to see patients at their medical judgment. Your dentist may recommend postponing care or prioritizing other strategies, depending on factors like your risk factors, your dental condition, and what's happening within your area (such as a community outbreak).

If you have a dental emergency, and are in pain that would normally lead you to call the dentist, call your dentist. Your dentist will discuss your situation and inform you what to do next. Emergency departments at hospitals are not set up to treat dental problems, like tooth pain. Reducing visits to the emergency room ensures staff are available for life-threatening emergencies and can help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

If you are experiencing any [symptoms of COVID-19](#) call your provider to reschedule or cancel your appointment.

Is it safe to see a dentist?

Yes. Dental clinics are required to have a COVID-19 preparedness plan and must follow state infection control protocols. Clinic staff and dentists will be using personal protective equipment,

additional cleaning measures and social distancing guidelines to help reduce potential exposure.

Your dentist or dental office will ask you to wear a mask to your appointment, in concurrence with masking requirements in Minnesota health care facilities.

Where can I find a dentist?

You can use the American Dental Associations' [Find a Dentist search tool](#) to find care, or search for other dentists near you on the internet. You can also call your dental insurance provider, if you have dental insurance, for a recommendation. If you are a Minnesota Health Care Program (MHCP) member, use the [\(MHCP\) Provider Directory](#) to find health care providers that serve fee-for-service MHCP members.

For uninsured and low-resourced Minnesotans, there are several clinics that provide free or reduced cost/sliding-fee services. Find a [list of clinics providing low-cost dental care](#) from the Minnesota Dental Association or [search for a community health center](#) in your area. Note: Not all community health centers offer dental care, so call ahead to check.

What can I do at home?

Continue practicing good oral hygiene while staying at home.

- Brush your teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste.
- Floss daily.
- Drink water from the faucet (tap water). Tap water is safe to drink and has fluoride in it, which helps protect teeth from cavities.
- Limit sugary beverages and foods, which can cause cavities.
- Avoid tobacco. If you currently smoke, vape or chew, find free phone-based or online coaching resources to help you quit at [Quit Partner MN](#)
- Continue to follow state public health guidelines for [COVID-19](#).