

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC



No routine dentistry should be provided for children during this pandemic. Routine dentistry should be deferred to minimise risk to patients, staff and the public. COVID-19 is seen to be transmitted via droplet, contact and airborne mechanisms. Aerosol Generating Procedures (AGP) present a higher risk of transmission of the virus and should therefore only be undertaken to provide urgent care (with all required safety protocols) where no other reasonable option is available.

COVID-19 has been identified to be in saliva of infected patients also. There is a minimum of three different pathways for COVID-19 to be present in saliva: from COVID-19 in the lower and upper respiratory tract, that enters the oral cavity together with the liquid droplets frequently exchanged by these organs; COVID-19 present in the blood, which can access the mouth via crevicular fluid; by major- and minor-salivary gland infection, with subsequent release of particles in saliva via salivary ducts.

For children who are able to spit, pre-procedural mouth rinse with 0.5%–1% hydrogen peroxide should be used, as it has nonspecific virucidal activity against corona viruses. Pediatric Dentists should avoid or minimize surgical procedures that can produce droplets or aerosols (**Basically avoiding the use of the dental drill**). **In extreme situations, an extraction may be the preferred treatment option for children with pulpal symptoms (in deciduous dentition) to reduce the need for aerosol generating procedures.**

Additionally, according to the evolving situation, in the present circumstances, until COVID-19 will be completely eliminated, as advised by the American Academy Of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD) Minimally Invasive Dentistry, such as Atraumatic Restorative Treatment (ART) which includes use of **Silver Diamine Fluoride (SDF)** (*A solution that arrests dental caries progression any further*), **Selective Caries Removal** (*using only manual dental hand instruments instead of the dental drill*) and the **Hall Technique** wherever feasible (*A method to put Stainless Steel Crowns on milk teeth without the usage of any drilling work over the tooth*), should be taken in to consideration.