



In Kentucky, the impact of COVID-19 has led to many changes in our healthcare systems including dental offices. Governor Beshear has [ordered](#) all dental offices to **reschedule all non-essential procedures** at this time. As an individual, parent, guardian, or caregiver, we know that there are questions around what is an emergent need to go to the dentist and what dental needs can wait until it's safe for Kentuckians.

Dental care you can reschedule for another time

- Routine visits for cleanings, x-rays, or exams
- Routine visits for braces
- Tooth removal if teeth are not painful
- Teeth whitening
- Cavity filling if teeth are not painful

Dental care that you should consult with your provider about

- Broken or knocked out tooth
- Pain or swelling in or around the mouth
- Pain in teeth or gums
- Dry socket
- Broken bracket or wire on braces
- Any other dental problem not listed here

Dental care that requires care by a dental professional

- Infection in the gums
- Treatment after a surgery (stitch removal, etc)
- Biopsy of abnormal tissue
- Dental care related to cancer treatments

It is important to remember that **you should not go to the emergency room for dental care** needs at this time. If you have an emergency, please call your dentist prior to visiting your dental office.

Please note, if you are experiencing any of the following, you should go to the nearest emergency room for treatment:

- Uncontrolled bleeding in the head or neck
- Swelling in the head or neck that makes it hard to breathe or swallow
- Trauma to facial bones that make it hard to breathe or swallow

If you are not feeling well, have had an exposure to COVID-19 or have tested positive for COVID-19 and you have an emergent dental care need, please call your dental office and let them know before entering the office and follow their instructions to keep yourself and those around you safe.

Good oral hygiene helps keep your mouth healthy, prevents gum disease, and cavities.

Children and adults can practice and maintain good oral health by:

-  Brushing your teeth for two minutes, twice a day with fluoride toothpaste.
-  Flossing your teeth one time per day, usually at bedtime. Watch this [video](#) from Colgate to learn how to floss.
-  Replacing your toothbrush every 3-4 months. Always replace your toothbrush if you have been sick.
-  Eating healthy foods and limiting sugary drinks. Try adding in more fluoridated tap water to help prevent cavities.

This guidance is a collaborative effort by the organizations listed below to curb the spread of COVID-19 and alleviate the burden on hospitals and emergency departments.

