



CORONAVIRUS
(Novel Coronavirus)



Dental Patient Communication During Coronavirus

*Suggested phrasing to use for voicemails, emails, signage,
and other forms of communication.*

It's hard to believe how quickly we've gone from normal to where we are now. The coronavirus outbreak presents a challenge unlike anything most of us have ever seen. This guide offers some messaging tips as you communicate with your patients during this uncertain time.



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Deciding on Your Message

The first step to creating a communication strategy is to determine what it is that you want to say. What is keeping your patients from coming to see you? Is it concern about whether it's safe to go to the dentist right now? Is it fear that they won't be able to afford the cost of treatment? You can craft a message that addresses either or both of these.

The key is creating a message that will resonate with your current and potential patients. There's an opportunity to connect with people who just want to feel safe right now. Taking care of their oral health is one way they can improve their overall health.

Emailing Your Patients

Chances are good that you've received emails from many companies about coronavirus concerns already. Take some time to craft a message that you can send to your current patients to address their concerns.

Your practice is unique, so your message should be unique. Highlight your doctors' names and experience, for example. Weave in messaging about why it's important to take care of their health.

Here is an example:

Hi [Patient First Name],

We know that you're hearing a lot about how businesses are responding to coronavirus concerns.

We have great news. Our team has always followed the health and safety directives from the CDC and OSHA. That's why we wear masks, gloves, and protective outerwear, which we change in between every patient. We sterilize every instrument after every use and thoroughly disinfect patient areas every time. We've increased our hyper-vigilance for cleanliness and are escorting people to a private treatment room instead of sitting in the waiting room.

We're healthcare providers and our commitment is to keep you safe and healthy. We have built our reputation in this community by providing high-quality dental care at an affordable price. We have many ways to help you fit the dental care you need into your budget. That's more important than ever right now.

Call us today at [PHONE NUMBER] so we can help you improve your health. We look forward to seeing you!

Your healthcare team,
Dr. _____ and team

Pediatric Dental Appointment Messaging

If the schools in your community have canceled classes, this is a great time to remind people to bring their kids in for an appointment.

Here is an example:

Hi [First Name],

I wanted to take a moment to let you know that we're committed to helping you and your family smile!

We know how busy life gets. If you have a child that is unexpectedly out of school, let's look at the bright side and schedule a check-up! Now's a great time to make sure your child's smile is healthy and beautiful.

We have built our reputation in this community by providing high-quality dental care in a compassionate, comfortable and safe environment. Our team is highly-experienced and we always follow all CDC and OSHA safety protocols. We're professional health care providers and fully trained in disease prevention and protection.

Plus, our friendly team strives to make your visit easy and stress-free. We all need that right now!

Call us today at (insert phone number) to schedule an appointment. We look forward to seeing you!

Sincerely,
[Dentist's Name]

Talking to Patients on the Phone

People are nervous, and many people are calling to cancel their appointments. It's important to understand the psychology of the patient and why they want to cancel. Then you can address their concerns with compassion and common sense.

For example:

"Mrs. Jones, I do see that the last time you were here, we found some infection. I'm afraid that if you cancel, then we won't be able to take care of that and it will get worse. We want your immune system to be in the best shape possible.

"It's important to take care of your oral health because your mouth is the gateway to your body, and your oral health has a direct impact on overall health. And I want to tell you that it's safe to come in, it's safe to get the treatment that you need.

"We're healthcare providers and I can promise you that we always follow all of the CDC's safety protocols. Just think about the last time you were here. We always wear masks and gloves and change our protective outerwear in between every patient. Everything is sterilized and we've increased our already-high standards so we're hyper-vigilant right now.

"Nothing is more important to us than your health, and that's why it's important to us to see you as scheduled. Please will you come in to see the doctor at 3 p.m.?"

Obviously, if a patient calls because he or she is ill, then you will want to cancel the appointment. Thank the patient for wanting to keep your patients and team as safe as possible.

While you have them on the phone, reschedule them with an appointment four to six weeks in the future, and then follow up with a phone call in a few days to check to see how they are doing. They'll appreciate your concern and reinforce that your team is caring and compassionate.

Website Welcome Message

On your website, update your welcome message to include reassuring phrasing such as "Our friendly team has been providing high-quality dentistry in a compassionate, comfortable and safe environment for more than __ years."



Door Signage

Some medical and dental practices have added a sign to their front door asking patients to text or call them when they arrive. It's important to make sure the font is large enough for people to see it and know that you are open.

Possible phrasing may include:

We're happy to see you!

We will bring you directly into a private treatment room.

Please call [PHONE NUMBER] to let us know that you have arrived.
Thank you!

Updating Office Hours

Do you need to communicate a change in your schedule? For example, are you reducing the number of days you are open? Are you working only half-days? Once you make those decisions, you'll need to update every place that lists your hours, including your website, Google map listing, Yelp, Facebook, and your office voicemail message.

Office Closure Messaging

Should your practice need to close unexpectedly, here is a possible voicemail message:

“Thank you for calling [PRACTICE NAME]. We’re following the developments regarding public health very closely. At this time, we are not scheduling appointments. Please leave a message and we will return your call when we re-open. Thank you.”

It’s important to also update your website with similar messaging.

Additional Resourcees

It’s more important than ever to make sure your team has the tools and training to effectively communicate with patients.

Patient Prism can help. We analyze your new patient calls, identify the people who don’t schedule, and send you an alert detailing what you can say to win them back – all within 30 minutes.

The image shows a laptop displaying the cover of a dental practice guide. The cover has a blue and orange design. On the left, there is a graphic of a coronavirus particle and a photo of a dentist wearing a mask and gloves. The text on the cover includes 'DENTAL PRACTICE GUIDE', 'Coronavirus Concerns and your Dental Patients', and 'Effective phrasing to use with new patients and current patients calling your dental practice.' Below the laptop, there is an orange button that says 'DOWNLOAD EBOOK >>'.

patientprism.com/CoronavirusConcerns

The image shows a tablet displaying the cover of a dental practice guide. The cover has a blue and orange design. On the left, there is a photo of a dentist and a receptionist. The text on the cover includes 'DENTAL PRACTICE GUIDE', 'Converting Calls During an Economic Downturn', and 'Effective strategies to keep your dental practice growing during uncertain times.' Below the tablet, there is an orange button that says 'DOWNLOAD EBOOK >>'.

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