

**Dear valued patients and referrers:**

We hope this letter finds you and your family in good health. As we resume our normal habits and routines following the mandatory shutdown of businesses across the state, we wanted to reassure you that our commitment to patient safety remains our primary concern.

Infection control has always been a top priority for our practice, and you may have seen this during your visits to our office. Our office follows infection control recommendations made by the American Dental Association (ADA), the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). We continue to be up-to-date on any new rulings or guidance that may be issued.

We have instituted the following changes in our practice to keep our patients and staff safe.

- Our office will communicate with you beforehand to ask some screening questions. You'll be asked those same questions again when you are in the office.
- Patients will have their temperatures checked upon arrival using a no-contact thermometer.
- We have hand sanitizer that we will ask you to use when you enter the office. You will also find some in the reception area and other places in the office for you to use as needed.
- All staff and visitors to the office will be required to wear facemasks in order to protect everyone around them. Patients will remove their face coverings only when being examined and treated.
- In order to limit the amount of exposure and unnecessary traffic into our office, we will limit the use of our reception lobby only to parents/guardians accompanying minors. All other patients will be asked to remain in their vehicles until their appointed time as opposed to waiting in the reception area.
- Appointments will be managed to allow for social distancing between patients. That might mean that you're offered fewer options for scheduling your appointment.
- We will do our best to allow greater time between patients to reduce waiting times for you, as well as to reduce the number of patients in the reception area at any one time.
- The Doctor and each staff member will self-screen every day for any possible signs of illness. This is to include daily logged temperature checks, as well as each employee filling out a symptom self assessment form.

- We will be running true HEPA air purifiers at all times to maintain fresher and cleaner air within the office.
- All pens, clipboards, door handles, and other objects touched by patients will be disinfected between each patient use.
- Elderly and medically compromised patients will be offered earlier appointments in the day to ensure as few persons as possible were in the office prior to their appointment.

The full scope and details of our response to COVID-19 can be found in the pages below.

We look forward to seeing you again and are happy to answer any questions you may have about the steps we take to keep you, and every patient, safe in our practice.

Thank you for your trust and loyalty, and we look forward to continuing to provide safe and outstanding endodontic care to our community.

Sincerely,  
*Dr. Albeiruti*

## **Forest Hills Endodontics COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan**

In accordance with Executive Order 2020-59, Forest Hills Endodontics institutes this COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan ("Plan").

Forest Hills Endodontics aims to protect its workforce by enacting all appropriate prevention efforts. Forest Hills Endodontics is continually monitoring guidance from local, state, and federal health officials and implementing workplace and Plan modifications where appropriate. Employees with questions are encouraged to contact Dr. Albeiruti via phone at 616-805-5920 or email at [info@fhendodontics.com](mailto:info@fhendodontics.com). Dr. Albeiruti is the onsite officer responsible for implementing, monitoring, and reporting related to this plan.

### Prevention Efforts and Workplace Controls

#### Cleanliness and Social Distancing

For our workers, Forest Hills Endodontics abides by the recommended social distancing and other safety measures and establishes the following:

Large gatherings are minimized whenever possible; Employees are encouraged to maintain physical distance even when on break, as well as before and after working hours; Employees are required to maintain physical distance when reporting to work, clocking in, leaving work, and clocking out; Employees' work stations are no fewer than six feet apart; Forest Hills Endodontics may utilize flexible work hours, wherever possible, to limit the number of employees simultaneously working on-site; Employees' interactions with the general public are modified to allow for additional physical space between parties; and non-essential travel is postponed or cancelled.

Forest Hills Endodontics provides non-clinical staff employees with, at a minimum, non-medical grade face coverings. Clinical staff will be provided with the proper personal protective equipment as per CDC guidelines, to include: N95 respirators (if/when they become available for purchase from suppliers), the highest ASTM level surgical face masks that are accessible to the practice (if N95s are not available due to national supply chain shortages/disruptions), face shields, gown, and hair coverings.

In addition, Forest Hills Endodontics is instituting the following cleanliness measures: Where possible, increasing ventilation rates and circulation throughout the office; performing routine environmental cleaning and disinfection, especially of common areas; and where available, providing hand sanitizer in high-traffic areas.

Employees are expected to minimize COVID-19 exposure by:

Implementing established OSHA infection control protocols when disinfecting operatories, equipment, and instruments after each patient; cleaning work stations at the beginning and end of each shift; avoiding, when possible, the use of other employees' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment; frequently washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds; utilizing hand sanitizer when soap and water are unavailable; avoiding touching their faces with unwashed hands; avoiding handshakes or other physical contact; avoiding close contact with sick people; practicing respiratory etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes; immediately reporting unsafe or unsanitary conditions on Forest Hills Endodontics premises; complying with Forest Hills Endodontics's daily screening processes; seeking medical attention and/or following medical advice if experiencing COVID-19 symptoms; and complying with self-isolation or quarantine orders.

#### Supplemental Measures Upon Notification of Employee's COVID-19 Diagnosis and/or Symptoms:

An employee with a COVID-19 diagnosis or who displays symptoms consistent with COVID-19 must be immediately removed from the worksite.

#### In response to a confirmed diagnosis or display of COVID-19 symptoms, Forest Hills Endodontics:

Informs all employees with and near whom the diagnosed/symptomatic employee worked of a potential exposure; keeps confidential the identity of the diagnosed/symptomatic employee; and conducts deep cleaning of the diagnosed/symptomatic employee's workstation, as well as those common areas potentially infected by the employee. All employees who worked in sustained, close proximity to the diagnosed/symptomatic employee are also removed from the worksite for at least 14 days; however, should these exposed employees later develop COVID-19 symptoms and/or receive a confirmed diagnosis, they may not report on-site until all return-to-work requirements are met, defined below.

Forest Hills Endodontics completes an OSHA Form 300, as well as a Form 301, "if it is more likely than not that a factor or exposure in the workplace caused or contributed to the illness." If an employee infects a coworker, the coworker has suffered a work-related illness if one of the recording criteria (e.g., medical treatment or days away from work) is met.

#### Worker Exposure Classification

Employees' "worker exposure" is classified as high risk by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's guidance because they have a high potential for exposure to known or suspected sources of COVID-19. Given this classification, Forest Hills Endodontics provides the following controls in addition to the above-summarized prevention efforts: offering appropriate personal protective equipment and complying with all infectious-disease requirements for healthcare facilities.

## Identification and Isolation of Sick and/or Exposed Employees

Risk and exposure determinations are made without regard to employees' protected characteristics, as defined by local, state, and federal law.

Any health-related information and documentation gathered from employees is maintained confidentially and in compliance with state and federal law. Specifically, medical documentation is stored separate from employees' personnel documentation.

## Employees' Self-Monitoring

The following employees should not report to work and, upon notification to Forest Hills Endodontics, will be removed from the regular work schedule:

Employees who display COVID-19 symptoms, such as fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, new loss of smell or taste, and/or gastrointestinal problems, including nausea, diarrhea, and vomiting, whether or not accompanied by a formal COVID-19 diagnosis; employees who, in the last 14 days, have had close contact with and/or live with any person having a confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis; and employees who, in the last 14 days, have had close contact with and/or live with any person displaying COVID-19 symptoms, such as fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, new loss of smell or taste, and/or gastrointestinal problems, including nausea, diarrhea, and vomiting.

Such employees may only resume in-person work upon meeting all return-to-work requirements, defined below.

## Daily Screenings

To prevent the spread of COVID-19 and reduce the potential risk of exposure, Forest Hills Endodontics screens employees on a daily basis.

If a touchless thermometer is available, temperature checks are performed.

Employees are asked the following questions before entering the worksite:

Are you currently suffering from any of the following symptoms – fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, new loss of smell or taste, and/or gastrointestinal problems, including nausea, diarrhea, and vomiting?

(If yes, access is denied, and employee is advised to self-isolate/self-quarantine at home, until employee is permitted to return to work as defined below.)

Have you lived with, or had close contact with, someone in the last 14 days diagnosed with or displaying the symptoms of COVID-19?

(If yes, access is denied, and employee is advised to self-isolate/self-quarantine at home, until at least 14 days after the close contact.)

Have you travelled internationally or domestically in the last 14 days to a high risk area with ongoing widespread COVID-19 transmission (as determined by the CDC)?

(If yes, access is denied, and employee is advised to self-isolate/self-quarantine at home, until at least 14 days after the international or domestic travel.)

Employees who develop symptoms during their shift must immediately report to Dr. Albeirutti.

#### Return-to-Work Requirements

Employees who were themselves diagnosed with COVID-19 may only return to work upon confirmation of the cessation of symptoms and contagiousness, proof of which may be acquired via the test-based strategy or the non-test-based strategy.

The test-based strategy is preferred but relies upon the availability of testing supplies and laboratory capacity. Under this strategy, employees may discontinue isolation and return to work upon achieving the following conditions:

Resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications; improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and negative results of an FDA Emergency Use Authorized molecular assay for COVID-19 from two consecutive nasopharyngeal swab specimens collected at least 24 hours apart.

Under the non-test-based strategy, employees may discontinue isolation and return to work upon achieving the following conditions:

At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications; improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and at least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

Employees who came into close contact with, or live with, an individual with a confirmed diagnosis or symptoms may return to work after either 14 days have passed since the last close contact with the diagnosed/symptomatic individual, or the diagnosed/symptomatic individual receives a negative COVID-19 test.

Employees are typically required to submit a release to return to work from a healthcare provider; given the current stressors on the healthcare system, Forest Hills Endodontics may accept written statements from employees confirming all the factors supporting their release.

#### Workplace Flexibilities and Potential Benefits for Employees Affected by COVID-19

Employees may be eligible for paid and unpaid leaves of absence.

Employees may be permitted to utilize available paid-time off provided under Forest Hills Endodontics policy concurrently with or to supplement any approved leave.

Forest Hills Endodontics is also mindful of its obligations under the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA"). Specifically, if an employee requests an accommodation because of a condition that may be complicated by COVID-19 (e.g., cystic fibrosis, emphysema, COPD), then Forest Hills Endodontics engages in the interactive process to provide a reasonable accommodation.

Additional items:

#### **Front Desk Modifications:**

-All patients (and those possibly accompanying them) are to be asked if they have any cold/flu/COVID-19 symptoms of any sort (cough, fever, loss of taste or smell) within the last 2

weeks and if they have had any suspected or confirmed exposure/contact with COVID (family member, work, etc). If any of these are affirmative, defer 2 weeks before scheduling. If a patient says their symptoms are allergy/seasonal induced, we will kindly ask that their family physician forward us a note stating patient's symptoms are not COVID related. Any patient saying they do have/recently had COVID or suspected COVID needs to be confirmed as being negative for COVID infection based on either one of the CDC's criteria (the 'symptom-based strategy' for those with symptoms, and the 'time-based strategy' for those without symptoms).

-Patients will be told that we will be checking their temperature upon arrival. Any temperature above 100.4 degrees will be an indication to dismiss and reschedule.

-Patients will be asked to wait in their vehicle instead of the reception area until they are called in. They are to call the front desk informing us of their arrival (tell them to leave a VM in case front desk staff steps away for a few moments). Inform all patients ahead of time that we are deliberately spacing appointments apart a little more to minimize office traffic and to allow time for more disinfection and office sanitization. There may be some delays in appointment start times.

-Patients are asked to wear a face mask or covering when they arrive and check out, as well as when they are waiting in the chair and not being actively treated or examined.

-We do not want to have any persons accompanying patients wait in the reception area (exception is a parent/guardian of a minor, or a disabled person that requires the presence of a helper that needs to stay). Any such persons MUST wear a face covering the entire time they are here.

-When patients arrive they are asked to sanitize their hands.

-We will be suspending outside office CBCT scan requests in order to limit the number of patients in our office and to not interrupt our flow.

-We will try to space patient appointments apart to the best of our ability. However, if scheduling conditions require it, we may have one patient seated in each operatory at once since the chairs are spaced 10 feet apart. The patient that is waiting is asked to keep their mask on.

-Front door of office is to remain locked. Prop door open for arriving patients or those using the restroom with the door stop.

-All pens and clip-boards are to be disinfected after each patient use.

-Disinfect door handles, counter tops, and any other touched surfaces after each patient.

-Front desk staff to wear mask/face covering at all times. Gloves are optional for non-clinical staff, but they are available. Eye protection/face shields are also available if non-clinical staff would like to wear them.

-“Sneeze guards” to be installed in place at the front desk.

-We will leave more time blocked at the end of the day to allow more time for infection control, doffing of PPE, and possible emergencies.

-Patients receiving care at our office will be instructed to contact us if they are diagnosed with COVID-19 and/or develop signs/symptoms of COVID-19 within the following 14 days

-For patients with conditions/risk factors placing them at higher risk for developing severe complications from COVID-19 (e.g. elderly, immunocompromised, multiple systemic illnesses, uncontrolled diabetes and/or hypertension), we are to attempt to schedule them earlier in the day to limit their potential exposure to other patients.

### **All Staff Modifications:**

-Daily temperature checks to be taken and recorded before the start of workday. Temperatures above 100.4 degrees mean employees must go back home.

-Wash/sanitize hands upon arrival to work.

-Any staff member experiencing any cold/flu/COVID signs/symptoms to inform the doctor and to stay home. The decision on when/how to return to be cleared to return to work will be made according to CDC guidelines.

-All staff must wear masks/face coverings when in the office, and they should be worn upon arrival.

-Six foot social distancing rules to be maintained as much as possible.

-Lunch/snack/eating breaks should be done one at a time in the lunchroom. If weather permits, staff may elect to take a break in their vehicles (however, they should clock out for any time spent outside the building and let Dr. know if stepping out).

### **Clinical Staff modifications:**

-Always wash/sanitize hands in front of the patient when they are seated.

-PPE to be worn: Gowns, head covering/bouffant caps, N95s -when they become available from our suppliers (otherwise level III mask), face shields.

-The normal operatory disinfection protocols will be maintained. However, some more time should be spent when wiping surfaces to make sure all potentially exposed areas are disinfected. Closer attention will be given to: countertop surfaces in the operatories (no tissue boxes or other items should be stored there), drawer and cabinet handles, disinfection of lead shields, apex locator leads, and x-ray sensors. The use of cotton plier forceps (or clean gloved hands) should be used to open drawers and handle supplies and instruments. Avoid bare handling of any items used during treatment. Arrange supplies so that they are easily picked up with forceps.

-Wash hands after removal of PPE. Store reusable PPE (e.g. face shields) in a clean place.

-Frequent hand washing in general. Even though we are working to maintain a very clean environment, it's still prudent to assume that any surface is potentially contaminated.

### **Plan Updates and Expiration**

This Plan responds to the COVID-19 outbreak. As this pandemic progresses, Forest Hills Endodontics will update this Plan and its corresponding processes.

This Plan will expire upon conclusion of its need, as determined by Forest Hills Endodontics and in accordance with guidance from local, state, and federal health officials.