



**INFECTION CONTROL NOTICE**  
**PLEASE ENSURE THAT ALL STAFF FOLLOW APPROPRIATE PROCEDURES**

**February 10, 2005**

Infection control is an important part of patient care. Concerns about the possible spread of blood-borne diseases, and the impact of emerging, highly contagious respiratory and other illnesses, require practitioners to establish, evaluate, continually update and monitor their infection control protocol.

Dentists have a professional obligation to maintain the standards of practice of the profession and, accordingly, must ensure that infection control procedures are carried out in their practice. Dental personnel must maintain current knowledge of infection control procedures and equipment operation, and apply and maintain these procedures properly on a routine basis in the office.

It is the dentist's responsibility to ensure that staff are adequately trained in infection control, and that their infection control supplies and equipment are fully operational, up to date, and routinely monitored for efficacy.

A well-designed Infection Control Protocol will protect both patients and dental office personnel from cross infection. Strategies should include:

- Screening of all patients
- Risk assessment
- Immunization of the dental team
- Implementation of Standard Precautions
- Proper hand hygiene techniques
- Use of appropriate barriers
- Elimination of infectious agents from instruments, surfaces and equipment (debridement, disinfection and sterilization)
- Sterilization equipment operation and efficacy monitoring
- Limiting the spread of blood, saliva, and any other bodily secretion by minimizing aerosol and splatter
- Management of occupational exposures to blood-borne pathogens, including postexposure prophylaxis (PEP) for work exposures to hepatitis B virus (HBV), hepatitis C virus (HCV); and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)
- Dental water quality concerns (e.g., dental unit waterline biofilms; delivery of water of acceptable biological quality for patient care; usefulness of flushing waterlines; use of sterile irrigating solutions for oral surgical procedures; handling of community boil-water advisories)
- Proper handling of sharps
- Proper disposal of contaminated wastes
- Regular updated staff training

- Written infection control program to prevent or reduce the risk of disease transmission. Such a program should include establishment and implementation of policies, procedures, and practices (in conjunction with selection and use of technologies and products) to prevent work-related injuries and illnesses among Dental Health Care Providers as well as health care-associated infections among patients.

Guidelines in Infection Control Protocol in the dental office have broadened and must reflect current knowledge of infection transmission and disease. As this information is constantly evolving, dentists should continually evaluate their infection control protocol, and ensure their employees understand the proper implementation of infection control measures.

## **Resources**

We offer the following resources from which you can obtain the most up-to-date information and current practices about the topic of infection control.

U.S. Centers for Disease Control  
Division of Oral Health  
(Guidelines for Infection Control in Dental Health-Care Settings)  
[www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/infectioncontrol](http://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/infectioncontrol)  
Tel: 770-488-6054

BC Centre for Disease Control  
[www.bccdc.org](http://www.bccdc.org)  
Tel: 604-660-0583  
Fax: 604-660-6066

Public Health Agency of Canada  
[www.phac-aspc.gc.ca](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca)  
British Columbia/Yukon  
Tel: 604-666-2083  
Fax: 604-666-2258