

Cleanliness and hygiene

The subject of cleanliness and hygiene is dear to us, though generally not one we bring up at dinner parties. So here we have the opportunity to wax lyrical about our **Cross Infection Policy**.

The surgery

All surfaces are cleaned with special single-use disinfectant wipes. This includes the countertops, the patient chair, and the dentist's overhead light. A fresh set of sterilised instruments is unpacked and set out for each patient.

Patient, dentist and nurse

Our dentists and nurses wear uniforms, facemasks, gloves and eye protection in the surgery. All of these are part of keeping things clean, hygienic and safe.

Before welcoming each patient into the surgery the dentist and nurse will use a disinfectant hand rub then put on a new pair of gloves. We will give you a new bib to protect your clothing, and special 'sunglasses' to protect your eyes.

Instruments

Some of our instruments are single-use, like drill pieces and needles; these are disposed of in special containers, then taken away to be incinerated. Reusable instruments, like mirrors and tweezers, are cleaned and sterilized as follows:

- First they are placed in an enzyme solution to dissolve debris.
- They are then transferred to an ultrasonic cleaner, which uses vibrations (ultrasound) to remove any remaining debris.
- The instruments are then inspected under magnification to ensure they are clean.
- Once this is confirmed, they are placed in an autoclave, which sterilizes the instruments under pressure and in a vacuum at a temperature of 134°C.
- Finally, the sterilized instruments are sealed in a bag and labelled.

Our machines are checked and validated regularly to ensure they are working effectively.

Contagion

For safety reasons we cannot treat patients while they have a cold sore, or herpes simplex virus. They are highly contagious and can be easily passed from person to person by close direct contact.

Cold sores are at their most contagious when they burst (rupture), and remain so until they are completely healed. So if you have a cold sore, play it safe and call us to reschedule your appointment.