

What to Do if Someone on Your Staff Tests Positive for COVID-19

You or someone on your staff has a confirmed case of COVID-19. Follow these steps to help ensure the health and safety of others in the practice and to reduce the likelihood of additional transmissions.

You or a member of your team has tested positive for COVID-19. What now?

Finding out that you or a member of your team has tested positive for COVID-19 can be a cause for concern on many levels. While your first concern will always be for the individual affected, as the practice owner or manager, you also have to be concerned about the rest of the staff and any patients that might have had contact with the healthcare provider with the positive diagnosis. These steps will help guide you through what you should do if someone in your practice tests positive for COVID-19.

1. Once the diagnosis is confirmed, follow all medical recommendations, including quarantine for 14 days to monitor symptoms.
2. Seek medical treatment immediately if symptoms worsen.
3. Try to determine who may have had contact with the COVID-19 positive individual when they were in the office. Notify the office staff of the diagnosis and ask the following questions of each person: When were they last in contact with the individual diagnosed with COVID-19? Get as detailed an answer as possible. Some questions to ask include:
 - What was the date of the last contact?
 - How long was the contact?
 - What was the approximate distance of the contact?
 - Are they experiencing symptoms? It's a good idea to instruct them to notify you immediately if they experience any change in symptoms.
4. Conduct a risk assessment for any healthcare provider who was exposed to the individual with a confirmed case of COVID-19 so they can take steps, such as quarantining, seeking testing, and implementing any appropriate work restrictions as suggested by the CDC in its Interim U.S. Guidance for Risk Assessment and Public Health Management of Healthcare Personnel with Potential Exposure in a Healthcare Setting to Patients with Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19), to determine self-quarantine/work restrictions.
5. Clean and disinfect environmental surfaces in the dental facility according to the guidance outlined in the CDC's Interim Infection Prevention and Control Guidance for Dental Settings During the COVID-19 Response.
6. Ask the unaffected staff to seek testing and to keep the rest of the staff informed regarding the date tested, when they received results and what those results were, the progression of symptoms, any hospitalization, improvement, etc.
7. Contact all patients who may have had contact with the COVID-19 positive individual to determine whether they're symptomatic. Recommend that they self-quarantine for 14 days and notify their physician if symptoms develop.
8. Follow the recommendations of the CDC and your local public health authority for additional steps. See the CDC's Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Patients with Suspected or Confirmed Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Healthcare Settings for guidance on infection control in a healthcare setting.

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