

Statement of the Hispanic Dental Association (HDA) on the COVID-19 Pandemic in the United States and its territories

(March 18, 2020)



As the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) global pandemic continues to develop, and in light of recent State of Emergency Declarations at State and National level, the HDA urges all its members and all other oral healthcare professionals to continue to protect themselves and, to do their part in slowing and limiting the spread of the infection, suspending or postponing all elective, non-urgent care until further notice.

Well informed dentists and members of their oral healthcare teams may and are expected to continue to care for dental and oral emergency patients, thus reducing the hospital emergency departments traffic of patients seeking care due to acute oral pain, dental infection and other oral urgencies/emergencies.

As new information becomes available the HDA will update its recommendations

The HDA continues to emphasize to its members, all healthcare workers and everyone on the basic behaviors we should all exercise to minimize the spread of COVID-19 and all other transmissible diseases. These preventative actions include the following:

- Avoid close contact with people who are or may be sick
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, then throw away immediately.
- Wash your hands often with soapy water for at least 20 seconds.
- Using alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Do not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands
- Stay home if feeling sick, unless seeking medical care.
- Practice social distancing: Stay at least six feet from others when possible.
- Eat well and maintain physical fitness routine, following the government recommended restrictions.

Other sensible recommendations

- Prepare for the possibility of temporary shortages of food, water and other supplies.
- Consider collecting a 2-week supply of non-perishable food. Select foods that do not require refrigeration or complicated preparation
- Keep a small amount of cash
- Make sure you have a plan for taking care of school aged children and the elderly
- Avoid public transportation or travel unless essential

Social distancing helps prevent the spread of the disease. Other suggested actions include:

- Plan home entertainment that limits contact with others.
- Until further notice avoid public gatherings such as movies and church or community events when possible.
- Shop at non-peak times. If available, take advantage of curb-side pick-up or home deliveries

Updated information about COVID-19 is available in many institutional e-sites, including www.WHO.int, www.CDC.gov, State Government Health Agencies, www.HDAssoc.org and www.ADA.org. These sites include information on symptoms, prevention, and other general information.

As the leading voice for Hispanic Oral Health the Hispanic Dental Association (HDA) provides Service, Education, Advocacy, and Leadership in the promotion of overall health of the Hispanic and other under-served communities. The HDA is 501 C(3) non-profit national professional association, with a varied membership including dentists, dental hygienists and auxiliaries and dental medicine students. It was established in 1990.