

COVID-19 and A-dec Dental Equipment Infection Control

March 23, 2020

Dear Valued Customer,

A-dec is committed to supporting healthcare professionals in the practice of dental equipment asepsis. During this rapidly developing situation regarding SARS-CoV-2 (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2), which causes COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), various health ministries/agencies and dental associations worldwide have established dedicated websites addressing the pandemic (References below). Please review these sites regularly as they are frequently updated with the most current information and guidance for healthcare professionals, communities, schools and businesses.

The [CDC Division of Oral Health \(DOH\)](#) is working with CDC's Emergency Operations Center to develop tailored COVID-19 guidance for dental health care personnel (DHCP). Once this guidance is available online, DOH and partners will promote these resources as well as any related events to the dental community. In the interim, broader CDC guidance for all healthcare practitioners is currently available, as discussed below.

Also in an effort to serve the dental specific community, the American Dental Association has published a link to [frequently asked questions from member dentists](#) covering topics ranging from personal protective equipment and recommended face masks, to maintaining the practice's physical environment and patient and staff communications. A-dec recommends referring to this site regularly for up to date information.

INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COVID-19

The CDC's [Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Patients with Suspected or Confirmed Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) in Healthcare Settings](#) outlines guidance specifically for the healthcare professional. It's important to note that these recommendations apply to healthcare professionals both in and out of hospitals. A-dec recommends reviewing the entirety of the CDC's guidance and draws your attention to the following when developing the protocols for your practice.

- Minimizing the chance of exposure before arrival, upon arrival and during the visit.
- Adhering to standard and transmission-based precautions.
- Take precautions when performing Aerosol-Generating Procedures. (AGPs)
- Train and educate healthcare personnel.
- Implement environmental infection control.
- Establish reporting within and between healthcare facilities and to public health authorities.

IMPLEMENTING ENVIRONMENTAL INFECTION CONTROL

The CDC's environmental infection control recommendations include the following:

- Dedicated medical equipment should be used when caring for patients with known or suspected COVID-19.
 - All non-dedicated, non-disposable medical equipment used for patient care should be cleaned, disinfected, and/or sterilized according to the manufacturer's instructions and facility policies.

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- Ensure that environmental cleaning and disinfection procedures are followed consistently and correctly.
- Routine cleaning and disinfection procedures are appropriate for SARS-CoV-2 in healthcare settings, including those patient-care areas in which AGPs are performed.
 - Cleaning and disinfection procedures include using cleaners and water to pre-clean surfaces prior to applying an EPA-registered, hospital-grade disinfectant to frequently touched surfaces or objects for appropriate contact times as indicated on the product's label.
 - If available, use a product found on the EPA's [List N: Products with Emerging Viral Pathogens AND Human Coronavirus](#), which includes products that meet EPA's criteria for use against SARS-CoV-2.
- Management of laundry, food service utensils, and medical waste should also be performed in accordance with routine procedures.
- Additional information about recommended practices for terminal cleaning of rooms and PPE to be worn by environmental services personnel is available in the [Healthcare Infection Prevention and Control FAQs for COVID-19](#).

RELATING CDC GUIDANCE TO A-DEC DENTAL EQUIPMENT SURFACE DISINFECTION

For many years A-dec has provided information on minimizing damage to equipment components and materials as DHCPs comply with infection control practices recommended by health authorities. Surface disinfectants and cleaning agents are aggressive by design. Broadly speaking, products that qualify under the EPA's emerging viral pathogen program are no exception. Historically, we have found that formulations with the strongest biocidal claims are often also among the most aggressive toward equipment materials. The degree of material degradation and rate at which it propagates is a function of the product's formulation and how it is used in the clinic.

To minimize the degradation of A-dec equipment, consider using single-use, FDA-cleared barriers. Replace the barrier after each patient use, cleaning and disinfecting the areas protected by a barrier at the end of the day or after each patient use if the barriers have been compromised.

Based on in-house testing and customer feedback, A-dec has identified that surface cleaner/disinfectant products which are high-dilution water-based phenol formulations or which contain quaternary ammonium compounds ("quats") with less than 25% isopropyl alcohol tend to be among the least aggressive toward equipment materials. Although several products on the EPA List N fit this description, many are known to cause damage to A-dec equipment or have not been tested by A-dec, and therefore potential effects on equipment are unknown. At this time, products on the EPA List N that we believe are among the least likely to cause damage to A-dec equipment materials include the following:

- Clorox Healthcare® VersaSure® Wipes from The Clorox Company (EPA Registration #67619-37).
- Clorox Healthcare® Disinfecting Wipes from The Clorox Company (EPA Registration #5813-79).

A-dec does not make any claims regarding the effectiveness of the above listed products or any other surface disinfectant product on A-dec dental equipment. Claims of effectiveness for surface disinfectants are made by the manufacturers of those products and are subject to EPA registration.

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To further protect against the detrimental effects of repeated use of surface disinfectants over time, A-dec recommends the following:

- More is not necessarily better. Detrimental effects to equipment are typically accelerated by frequency and/or heavy exposure. Always follow the instructions for use supplied by the cleaner/disinfectant manufacturer. Where applicable it is recommended that wipes instead of spray be used and that sprays be applied to a cloth instead of being applied directly to equipment.
- At the end of each day after completing the contact time for the last surface disinfectant application of the day, rinse the equipment with a water-dampened cloth and then dry to minimize the build-up of surface disinfectant residue.

DENTAL UNIT WATERLINE MAINTENANCE

A-dec recommends the following best practices for dental unit waterline maintenance (DUWL).

- **Maintain.** Use of tested products and procedures to protect waterlines from further contamination. A-dec recommends daily use of **A-dec ICX®** waterline treatment tablets to prevent accumulation of odor and foul-tasting bacteria. ICX is backed by peer review studies and was developed and tested specifically for use with A-dec equipment.
- **Monitor.** Regular monitoring of water quality using an in-office test kit or water quality testing laboratory that delivers quantifiable results.
- **Shock.** Administer a shock treatment when water quality test results fail to meet the clinic's water quality goals. A-dec recommends using a dental unit waterline shock treatment product that is registered with the EPA.

For clinics that will be closed for two or more weeks, A-dec recommends taking the following steps.

Before closing the clinic:

- Turn off the delivery system master toggle; then remove and empty the water bottle.
- Reattach the empty water bottle to the unit and turn on the master toggle.
- Completely purge all air/water syringes into a sink or cuspidor by activating the water button on the air/water syringe until no more water is discharged.
- Completely purge all handpiece tubings into a sink or cuspidor by activating the foot control and flush toggle until no more water is discharged.
- Turn off the delivery system master toggle. The waterlines are now air purged and ready for the clinic closure.

Before returning the dental unit to service when the clinic reopens:

- Perform a shock treatment using a product that is registered with the EPA for this purpose, following the manufacturer's instructions for use.
- Resume daily use of A-dec ICX tablets and waterline maintenance protocol. See our [Waterline Maintenance Guide](#) for details.

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REFERENCES FOR THE DENTAL COMMUNITY

The following references provide educational information for your staff and patients regarding COVID-19.

- The [World Health Organization](#).
- The [US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).
- The [Environmental Protection Agency](#) published list of disinfectant products that have qualified for use against SARS-CoV-2, the novel coronavirus that causes COVID-19.
- The American Dental Association (ADA). [Coronavirus Resource Center for Dentists](#) including an FAQ and guidance on personal protection equipment including masks and communicating with patients.
- The [Journal of Dental Research](#) online paper on COVID-19 with infection control guidance for dental office and dental education settings.
- [Organization for Safety, Asepsis and Prevention](#) (OSAP). [COVID-19 Toolkit](#) that includes links to the leading healthcare-related administrations and organizations such as the WHO, CDC, Occupational Safety and Health Administration ([OSHA](#)), US Environmental Protection Agency ([EPA](#)) National Institutes of Health ([NIH](#)) and others.

A-dec is committed to supporting our customers during this rapidly developing situation regarding COVID-19. We will continue to share new information, guidance and recommendations as they become available. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of further assistance.

Regards,



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