

POST COVID-19 REOPENING POLICY

03/06/20

This policy has been created based on multiple updated sources from within the dental and medical professions and the government. It outlines modifications to our normal procedures that we intend to employ once the practice can be reopened after the COVID-19 pandemic peak has subsided.

It is not known at this time whether these procedures are temporary or whether they will become a permanent feature of the way dental practices must be run to ensure patient and staff safety in the future. The worldwide COVID-19 pandemic is still being evaluated and studied and policies and recommendations are likely to change in line with new scientific evidence over time.

We would like to thank all our patients for their patience and forbearance during the period of temporary practice closure and for their understanding and cooperation whilst we implement new measures at the practice. We will of course be providing orthodontic care to all our patients in the safest possible environment. We greatly appreciate your assistance with any new or modified procedures at the practice.

PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE

The practice will re-open for patients who require emergency orthodontic treatment on Monday 8th June 2020. This will be extended to other patient groups as the lockdown restrictions are eased further.

The Origin Orthodontics team will prepare the practice for reopening and run through our updated procedures before patients return to the practice. We will initially be seeing:

- Patients with emergency problems that require urgent assessment and attention that have been previously triaged by us during COVID-19.
- Patients that have complex clinical treatment management issues
- Patients that have experienced a delay in active treatment greater than 15-20 weeks having missed their appointment pre COVID-19.
- Patients with treatment that was not completed prior to the lockdown.

As lockdown restrictions are eased further, we will then see:

- Routine fixed appliance adjustments
- Invisalign patients who require refinement or additional aligners

During our final phase of reopening we expect to see:

- Patients who were due for pre-DeBond examinations during the period of closure
- Patients with removable retainers
- Patients in bonded retention
- Patients who are due orthodontic reviews

PATIENT COMMUNICATION BEFORE REOPENING

We will be contacting patients and confirming appointments ahead of their scheduled time.

We will request that all patients who are attending Origin Orthodontics update their standard medical and dental history forms beforehand. These forms will now be in electronic format and we will no longer be using paper forms.

The assessment forms include a new section which will allow us to assess your level of risk for coronavirus infection before you attend the surgery.

NEW MEASURES TO REDUCE THE RISK OF COVID-19 TRANSMISSION

Our normal infection control protocols at Origin Orthodontics against all previously known pathogens are already woven into all clinical activity carried out at the practice. It should be remembered that an orthodontic practice is already a very clean environment compared to public areas and there is no evidence of COVID-19 transmission occurring in increased rates in orthodontists or their staff. We have collectively evaluated all the updated guidance and observed what measures have been put in place in other countries. We feel that the measures which are outlined in this policy will reduce risk to the minimum level at the practice. Please be assured that all our clinical staff will also be complying with our updated procedures to reduce the risk of cross infection in both directions.

BEFORE ATTENDING AT THE PRACTICE

We will carry out a pre-attendance assessment via your completed Medical History/Assessment forms at least three days before your appointment and, if necessary, a follow-up telephone conversation to assess relative coronavirus infection risk. In addition **we require all patients** to submit a recent series of images to the practice using our remote monitoring app Dental Monitoring (DM). Use of DM helps us to identify clinical problems, treatment progress and prepare clinical materials in advance of your appointment with us and helps us to ensure your time in the dental surgery is minimised.

Our staff will contact you to remind you of this if we have not received your completed forms or DM scans. If you have any difficulties completing the forms we can help you with this over the telephone. Our Orthodontist Dr Usman Qureshi or Orthodontic Therapist Adriana Bosienak may also carry out a video consultation with you to assess your orthodontic problem prior to your visit.

If we feel that you are at risk of having possibly been infected, even if you are asymptomatic, we will respectfully request for you to delay booking any appointments with us for at least one month. If we do not receive the completed medical questionnaire or DM scans in time and we are unable to contact you, we may need to cancel your appointment. You may be charged for the appointment if we are unable to fill it at short notice as per our normal terms and conditions.

We recommend that patients in the high-risk groups for developing complications from coronavirus delay non-essential orthodontic treatment for as long as possible until the trend of the pandemic becomes clear. If you are in a high risk group and do require treatment we will schedule your appointment at the beginning of the day. We will, of course, continue to use remote monitoring where necessary.

Origin Orthodontics will be operating contactless payment systems going forwards, and we will request that payment is made online or over the telephone for your appointment or for oral hygiene products prior to attending.

When travelling to the practice, we would recommend that you limit close contact with other members of the public as far as possible, and we encourage the use of face-masks/coverings. We will meet all patients outside the building and bring them straight into the surgery. One adult only is able to attend with a child if necessary; all queries or communications with the Orthodontist should be remotely discussed prior to the appointment by arrangement. Please

do not bring additional family members with you unless they are happy to wait in the car or outside the building.

ARRIVING AT THE PRACTICE

Please call us on arriving at the practice from your car or from outside the building to let us know you have arrived. Please ensure you arrive on time (preferably no greater than 5-mins before your appointment), as if you are late we will not be able to see you. Our receptionist will advise you once we are ready to see you and our nurse will greet you and welcome you into the practice.

Before entering the practice you will be required to use a hand sanitiser and we will take your temperature with a no touch thermometer. If your temperature is above 37.8°C, you will be unable to enter the practice and will be asked to return home and self isolate as per current government guidelines.

We will ask that you place your coat and belongings into a clear bag which we will provide and this should be taken away with you when you leave, and disposed of accordingly. We intend to eliminate waiting inside the practice and regrettably there will be no reception facilities. Appointments will be staggered so that patients do not arrive or leave at the same time as other patients as far as we are able to manage. We would encourage that you brush your teeth and visit the toilets if needed before you attend the surgery as use of our facilities are restricted.

If you are well, we will direct you straight to the surgery to continue with your orthodontic appointment.

All future appointments will be made and confirmed by email or telephone.

PRACTICE PROCEDURES

The Origin Orthodontics team have spent time critically looking at every aspect of the practice with a view to removing all non-essential items that can potentially be the cause of infection. You will find that the practice may appear to be quite bare when you attend. We regret that during this interim period, our waiting room will not be open and we will not be providing our normal tea and coffee services in the interests of reducing all opportunities for cross infection to a minimum. All clinical and common areas including door handles and surfaces will be regularly disinfected in addition to our normal surface cleaning protocols between patients. Origin Orthodontics will be providing a buffer period between patients to allow additional time for decontamination procedures, allow for any treatment overruns and allow preparation time for the next patient so that they do not need to wait in the reception area.

ORTHODONTIC PROCEDURES

All clinical staff will be using personal protective equipment (PPE) in line with current recommendations and evidence. We apologise in advance for the necessary reduction in social interaction that this will necessitate. Whilst our masks may make us appear impersonal and distant, please be assured we are still the same friendly team underneath it all!

Orthodontic Treatment carries a risk of aerosol exposure, all be it in comparison to many aspects of dentistry these risks are low (Public Health England, Faculty of General Dental Practitioners UK).

We are however mindful that a few of our orthodontic treatments carry greater risks of aerosol exposure. It is difficult for us to carry out those orthodontic procedures without generation of some level of aerosol. Aerosol suspended in the air is a theoretical source of infection which we obviously wish to keep to a minimum.

Currently the dental literature suggests:

Our use of our normal high-volume suction reduces aerosol production by over 90%. Our regular surgical face-masks filter approximately 60% of remaining airborne particles. FFP2 and FFP3 masks filter 94% and 99% respectively of airborne particles in both directions (patient to clinician and clinician to patient).

We therefore feel that our normal orthodontic procedures can be carried out with minimal risk by the use of high-volume suction, surgical masks (Type IIR) and in aerosol generating procedures FFP2/FFP3 masks as appropriate. Despite the financial impact of the coronavirus, Origin Orthodontics will not be increasing its normal fees unless absolutely necessary. However, the time taken to carry out treatment sessions may need to be extended which will be included into the fees for your treatment.

The vast majority of our patients are otherwise healthy without coronavirus infection and we are confident that we are able to provide orthodontic care for these patients in as normal an environment as possible while bearing in mind our responsibilities to mitigate risks of infection spread as far as is practically possible.

This policy will be constantly reviewed and updated as necessitated by circumstances over time. If you have any questions regarding this policy or about your orthodontic care at Origin Orthodontics please do not hesitate to contact us on info@origin-orthodontics.co.uk