

## Reason for and Precautions of Covid-19 Transmission in Dentistry

Sehar Siraj\*

Research Department, AKUH, Pakistan

\*Corresponding Author: Sehar Siraj, Research Department, AKUH, Pakistan.

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### Introduction

As we know that now a day a disease which is known by the name Covid 19 is being spreading so rapidly that no one has control over it. There are several sources through which this virus is spreading, though these sources are known to everyone which includes through sneezing, coughing and close contact of two persons as they have been highlighted by media and other professional bodies like WHO, but the main issue is that people forget to follow the standard operating procedures (SOPs) as defined by higher authorities to overcome/ from spreading of this virus and people even don't know in which fields there is higher risk of its transmission may be due to lack of awareness in between them.

There are several diseases around us in which there is close contact of doctor and patient, and in the absence of proper personal protective equipment's there is chance of transmission of any viral infection which either the doctor or patient have to other, so today the field which I have observed to be the one of crucial source for transmission of Covid-19 in Dentistry. This is one of the major field in which the spreading of this virus can be so fast as in every small dental treatment there is a close contact of surgeon and patient.

### Body

In the pandemic situation everyone was focused towards the proper SOPs but when they were going to hospital for any other disease except covid, so during their treatment some SOPs were compromised as if I talk particularly about dentistry, I visited 2 clinics during the pandemic where I observed following points:

1. In the first clinic I observed that there was a rush of people
2. SOPs were not followed
3. Personal protective equipment's were not properly used
4. Their staffs were not even asking the visitors to follow the SOPs as they on their behalf was not following it.

While in the other clinic I observed:

1. There was a strict security who were not allowing any individual to enter in without mask
2. Temperature of each individual was checked before entering in
3. Their staff was awaring visitors about the benefits of following SOPs
4. Proper personal protective equipment's were used.

After observing this events I was of the view that there may be a chance that visitors coming here may have suffered from or exposed to covid-19 or if not patient than might be surgeon coming here might have suffered from or exposed to covid-19 so I decided to conduct a short survey from surgeons after seeking their permission to identify whether is there any chance that due to poor following of SOPs covid-19 is spreading in dentistry.

### Following questions were asked

- Q1. Have you ever been exposed to or suffer from covid-19? if yes than when?  
(A). Surgeon response: Yes, I suffered last month
- Q2. Before you tested positive for covid, you were coming to clinic and was doing treatments so did you ask from your last 5 patients that whether they suffered from covid?  
(A). Surgeon response: Yes, I asked not from 5 but from 3 and they all suffered from covid.
- Q3. Did you and those patients wear proper personal protective equipment (PPE) during the treatment?  
(A). I wear proper PPE but we didn't ask patients to wear
- Q4. Did you ask all patient to do covid test before the treatment?  
(A). No, as mostly the patients come here in severe pain so we don't delay in procedure, if we observed that patients have no symptoms of covid-19.

## Opinion

From the above scenario I come on following points.

As we don't know that how much patients/doctors are asymptomatic relating to covid-19, so it should be mandatory for everyone to do a covid test as its results come in a day, before any procedure to ensure that no transmission of virus occurred between patient and surgeon. Moreover, if the patient come in severe pain so it can be mitigated by giving him medicines, and procedure should be delayed if patient is suffering from covid symptoms so that the safety of both surgeon and patient can be ensure. Moreover, this prior testing for covid helps in preventing the spreading of virus from asymptomatic patient to normal thus reducing nosocomial infection.

According to WHO 1.7 million nosocomial infection occur annually. PPE includes:

1. N95 mask
2. Eye shield
3. Ear plug
4. Gown
5. Gloves
6. Surgical cap.

All the personal protective equipment's should be used on both patients and surgeon as if it lacks from any of above party it could harm the other one, except for the mask which should only be used by surgeon not patient as he/she is come for dental treatment. PPE for patients are important because there is invasive procedure in dentistry.

In dentistry the equipment used should be properly sterilize to prevent the spread of infection and it should be sole responsibility of doctor/surgeon to make sure before treatment that all the equipment's used is last patient's treatment is properly sterilized before using it in treatment of other patient.

Though everyone is aware of SOPs but by mistakenly we sometimes forget to follow the strict SOPs either by shaking hand with others or not washing hand after shaking which results in spreading of disease.

I think that covid-19 transmission in dentistry is very crucial but it has not been highlighted on high platform from any professional bodies, it can only be highlighted after doing a research from a reputable organization.

"Health is in the hand of our own responsibility,  
The word awareness is the umbrella,  
In which health shelter itself".

## Conclusion

From the above information I conclude that to prevent the spread of covid-19 in dentistry we should make sure that proper SOPs are followed by not only the patient and surgeon but also by all the visitors present in the clinic moreover it should be essential for both patient and surgeon to wear proper PPE so that the spread of infection can be controlled from both the ends. In every small clinic there should be pre requirement of covid test before any treatment/procedure so that spreading of covid from asymptomatic patient can be avoided (as those types of patient even don't know that they are suffering from that disease but they have virus in them).

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