Recommendations

- Follow the usual basic procedures for preventing infections.
- Wear personal protective gear, such as a surgical mask and safety glasses, to protect the mucous membranes of the eyes, nostrils and mouth from splatters, droplets and aerosols.
- If a patient comes to the clinic with flu-like symptoms, postpone any non-urgent dental procedures. After the patient leaves:
  * disinfect the area, particularly any non-clinical surfaces (chair, reception counter and other surfaces) that the patient may have touched.
- If you must treat the patient (emergency procedures only), staff must wear N95 masks. The treatment must be done at the end of the day, and staff must wear protective clothing (e.g. a lab coat). Remove the protective clothing afterwards and place it in a hermetically sealed bag; it is best to wait 48 hours before washing the clothing with the appropriate precautions.
Patient triage

BY TELEPHONE
You should do a triage of your patients to “intercept” anyone showing flu-like symptoms. Ideally, this triage should be done over the telephone when the appointment is confirmed, with a few simple questions (see the triage questionnaire). If the patient does show any symptoms, the appointment must be postponed. Infected people are contagious for about 24 hours before symptoms appear and up to seven days thereafter.

WAITING ROOM
When patients arrive, ask them the questions in the triage questionnaire. If a patient shows flu-like symptoms, you must:

- give the patient a mask (ideally a N95 mask, but an examination mask will do);
- ask the patient to disinfect his or her hands (soap or gel);
- treat the patient only in an emergency (to relieve pain or contain infection), and then only at the end of the day;
- isolate the patient from the other patients in a separate room (not in the waiting room) and contact the nearest health centre to ask how to proceed;
- disinfect the area, particularly any non-clinical surfaces (chair, reception counter and other surfaces) that the patient may have touched.

Any staff member who has been in contact with a potentially infected patient must wash his or her hands and put on a new mask and gloves.
Sample triage questionnaire

If the patient answers “Yes” to this question, it is best to postpone the appointment (until after the critical seven-day period): In the past seven days, have you travelled to a zone in which there is a risk of influenza, or have you been in contact with anyone who has travelled to a zone at risk?

If the patient answers “Yes” to these questions, you should postpone the appointment and advise the patient to contact his or her doctor or call Info-Santé (811): Are you suffering from a new cough or an existing cough that has worsened, with a fever (over 38°C)?

- Yes
- No

Or

Are you having trouble breathing, and a fever? And any of the following symptoms?

- Do you have a sore throat? Yes No
- Do you have achy muscles or joints? Yes No
PROTECTING THE DENTAL CLINIC
AGAINST INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Waiting room

- Install hydroalcoholic gel or foam dispensers in your waiting room.
- Install clearly visible posters asking patients to use the hydroalcoholic gel or foam dispensers.
- Leave the posters up and the dispensers accessible at all times. They are useful year round.

Clinic staff members who have to deal closely with an infected patient (within six feet/two metres) should wear a mask, gloves and safety glasses to protect themselves from aerosols.
PREVENT INFECTIONS: PLEASE DISINFECT YOUR HANDS