



Dental Hygiene Program

Bloodborne and Infectious Disease Guidelines

Students and employees will be expected to provide dental hygiene treatment to patients who have a known, and often unknown, bloodborne and infectious diseases. To do so, adhere to all measures described in the Dental Hygiene Program Infection Control Policy. In an effort to safeguard the health of student and employees, the TCC Dental Hygiene Program/Clinic adopts the following bloodborne and infectious disease guidelines:

1. The Dental Hygiene Clinic will take such steps as are necessary to comply with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommendations and guidelines and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations for the protection from transmission of bloodborne pathogens in the dental hygiene clinical setting. Standard infection control precautions will be followed for treatment of all patients in the Dental Hygiene Clinic.
2. The Dental Hygiene Clinic will take whatever steps are necessary to maintain the confidentiality of its patient record information. Any information about a patient's medical condition, especially with respect to transmissible diseases, is highly confidential. Maintaining such confidentiality is a non-negotiable ethical requirement for those persons associated with the Dental Hygiene Clinic and Program. A breach of this ethical precept constitutes grounds for either immediate discharge or expulsion, whichever is appropriate.
3. If during dental hygiene treatment, a patient is discovered as having a bloodborne or infectious disease, immediate medical consultation with the patient's physician or an infectious disease specialist must be sought with the informed consent of the patient. Treatment may be temporarily interrupted until such a time that determination to proceed with treatment is made. This will ensure that for the patient's own safety the patient will not be at unusual risk to receive dental hygiene care.
4. Relating to HIV seropositive, AIDS or Other Bloodborne and Infectious Diseases:
 - a. When a patient presents to the Dental Hygiene Clinic determined to be HIV seropositive but not having AIDS or other bloodborne and infectious diseases (i.e. Hepatitis B virus (HBV), sexually transmitted diseases, etc.), that patient will be screened in the normal manner and, if qualified under the usual patient acceptance criteria, treatment will be rendered following standard precautions and other infection control measures.
 - b. When a patient presents to the Dental Hygiene Clinic who is determined to have AIDS but is in a remissive and/or non-severe stage of disease, that patient will be screened in the normal manner and, if qualified under the usual patient acceptance criteria, treatment will be rendered following standard precautions and other infection control measure.
 - c. When a patient diagnosed with AIDS presents to the Dental Hygiene Clinic and is determined to have active symptoms of the disease, i.e. opportunistic infections, neurological manifestations, neoplasms, etc. treatment will be suspended until such a

- time the patient is in remission from active symptoms.
- d. The Dental Hygiene Clinic reserves the right to suspend treatment at any time to any of the above described patients to seek a medical consultation with the patient's physician or an infectious disease specialist, with the informed consent of the patient, so that it may be determined that for the patient's own safety the patient is not at unusual risk to receiving dental hygiene care.
 - e. Any statement or assertion about an identifiable individual relating to bloodborne and infectious diseases, seropositivity, negative HIV serological results, risk status, antigen or antibody levels, or whether the patient has or has not been tested for AIDS or HIV infection are to be considered confidential information. This information should not be discussed or disclosed to any person other than the patient or persons with a legitimate need to know. Legitimate need to know would include provisions for a health care worker's protection or for the patient's care such as: the student clinician, supervising instructors/supervising dentist, Course Professor, other clinic-related staff and faculty and the Dental Hygiene Program Director.
 - f. It will be expected that students treat assigned patients determined to have a bloodborne or infectious disease as they would any other assigned patient using the necessary precautionary measures alluded to in this policy. Patients acquiring HIV seropositivity, AIDS, or other bloodborne or infectious disease during the course of their treatment by a student will continue treatment by the student unless the patient elects to terminate the treatment, becomes too ill to continue treatment, or treatment is suspended for one of the above mentioned reasons.
 - g. The Dental Hygiene Program will encourage students and employees who believe that they are at risk for HIV infection to seek testing and counseling and discuss their situation with a physician, an infectious disease specialist designated and/or institutional official.
 - h. The Dental Hygiene Program will not initiate mandatory HIV screening of students or employees unless justified by evidence of significant risk for patients and consistent with state and federal law.