



➤ **A Message from PHC Dental:**

Our dental office is taking every precaution to ensure the health and safety of our patients and staff. In Montana, most dentist offices are only providing care if it is an emergency and some offices are temporarily closed. We offer the following guidance to anyone wondering about when to go to the dentist, and how to stay safe and healthy during this time.

➤ **What should I do if I have tooth or mouth pain?**

If your mouth or teeth hurt, or you think you have a dental emergency, your first step should not be to go to the emergency room. Instead, call your dental provider or local community health center. Tell them how you feel, including if you have a fever, a cough, or chest pain. Your dental team will tell you what to do next. Your dentist may talk with you about your symptoms on the phone or over video chat.

****Calling your dentist and asking for guidance before going to the emergency room is an important step to reduce the burden on busy Emergency Room teams.**

➤ **What are some examples of dental emergencies?**

- Very bad toothache pain (not just a twinge)
- Swollen gums, face, or neck
- Bleeding in your mouth that does not stop
- Infection or a substantial risk of it
- Recent trauma to the mouth

➤ **What kinds of dental appointments should be rescheduled?**

- Regular exams or cleanings
- Regular visits for braces
- Treatment for cavities that are not painful (*provider discretion – call your dentist)
- Removal of teeth that are not painful (*provider discretion – call your dentist)

➤ **Tips for Practicing Good Hygiene:**

- Take care of your teeth and mouth. Brush and floss your teeth, clean your tongue, swish, and spit. Gargle twice with mouthwash.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. Scrub for at least 20 seconds or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap is not available.
- Don't touch your face.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with the inside of your elbow or upper arm.
- Stay home if you are feeling sick, and seek appropriate medical guidance.