

The Right PPE for the Purpose

The personal protective equipment you use for any given task should protect you against any hazards to which you otherwise would be exposed.

Suggested PPE for Tasks within the Dental Setting

Patient care

	Personal Protective Equipment						Comment* (below)
	Gloves (patient examination or sterile surgical)	Face Protection (e.g., mask, face shield)	Eye Protection (e.g., safety glasses, face shield)	Garment (e.g., lab coat, gown, clinic jacket)	Utility Gloves	Other* (below)	
Greeting the patient in the reception area							X
Taking a medical history						1*	X
Performing an oral exam	X	3*	3*	1*			
Polishing teeth	X	X	X	X			
Scaling (manual)	X	X	X	X			
Scaling (ultrasonic)	X	X	X	X			
Suctioning during a cavity preparation	X	X	X	X			
In-operative charting				1*		2*	X
Taking an impression	X	3*	3*	1*,3*			
Answering the telephone during treatment						2*	X

Instrument processing

Placing instruments in a holding solution (to keep them moist until they can be cleaned)		X	X	X	X		
Loading the ultrasonic cleaner / instrument washer		X	X	X	X		
Handscrubbing instruments		X	X	X	X		
Wrapping instruments for sterilization				1*	X		
Loading the sterilizer				1*	X		
Removing instrument packs from the sterilizer						4*	
Distributing/storing wrapped, sterile instrument packets							X

Operatory clean-up

Transporting instruments from operatory to reprocessing area	X			1*			
Environmental surface disinfection (using spray-wipe-spray technique)		X	X	X	X		
Placing a clean surface barrier on an uncontaminated surface				1*			X

Maintenance / quality control

Cleaning the ultrasonic chamber, discarding and replacing solution		X	X	X	X		
Recording results of sterilizer monitoring							X

* Other / Comments:

- (1) Although it may not be required, it is acceptable to leave on protective clothing that has been worn throughout patient treatment as long as it is not visibly soiled. Never wear personal protective equipment in break rooms, offices, or reception areas.
- (2) Alternative to removing gloves, vinyl overgloves (foodhandlers' gloves) can be donned to limit the spread of contamination to clinical contact surfaces during treatment interruptions.
- (3) Optional; may provide additional protection against non-bloodborne disease transmission.
- (4) Heat-resistant gloves protect against burns from hot instrument packs.