

# Cold sores...

## Should I visit the dentist?



Cold sores are extremely infectious, as the serum in them is laden with virus (herpes simplex). Stretching the lips may cause the blister to burst and pump millions of viruses into the surrounding area. Our policy is not to carry out treatment until it's healed as it puts us at risk of herpetic whitlows (finger infection) or eye infections if particles get around the visors/eye protection.

If you have an appointment and feel a cold sore developing, please contact us as soon as possible to postpone your treatment.

If you have acute symptoms requiring emergency assistance, appointments may be booked but the treatment will be at the discretion of the dentist.

We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause but feel this measure protects both our staff and patients alike.

## **CAN I SEE MY DENTIST/HYGIENIST WITH A COLD SORE?**

So, the big question here is, can we see you with a cold sore? The short answer is no, we can't see you within the first 2 weeks of the cold sore appearing. As we work in the area where the infection is (your mouth/lips), it can be really easily spread. Even though we have amazing infection control policies in place, even creating an aerosol with a handpiece or the sonic scaler, can be enough to set off a reaction to someone else. Once the virus is in the air, it's quite difficult to get rid of. And also, because your lips may feel sore and could crack or bleed during treatment. This will just prolong the healing process for you as well.

If urgent dental treatment is required (i.e. you are in pain and need immediate attention), our dentists will request that your cold sore is protected with a cold sore plaster to minimise the risk of cross-infection during emergency dental treatment.

So, if you do get a cold sore and you have a dental or hygienist appointment arranged, please give us a call on 0117 932 4455 with as much notice as possible, and we can postpone any non-emergency treatment.