

Risk Assessment COVID-19 Period

Factors for consideration



The world is currently experiencing a global pandemic that is impacting on every aspect of society, including provision of dental services. The airborne transmission of the SARS-CoV-2 virus poses new and specific challenges for risk mitigation in the dental setting. It is in particular the risk of transmission via aerosol-generating events (AGE) and procedures (AGP) that has come into focus. This has resulted in an increase in already stringent dental cross-infection precautions as well as restrictions on when and where provision of the various types of dental treatment modalities can take place.

Implant therapy is one of the dental treatment modalities that are subject to restrictions. It is traditionally regarded as elective and by its nature includes invasive, surgical treatment. It also presents with differing levels of difficulty and degrees of risk for complications in every patient case.

In the midst of the pandemic it seems logical to defer any elective, non-essential treatment. However, not proceeding with treatment can result in problems for patients or increased risk of further complications or sub-optimal outcomes. Thus there may be situations where proceeding with treatment (ensuring adequate safety precautions for the patient, practitioner and assistant) is, on balance, a better option.

This COVID-19 addendum to the SAC Classification is a living document intended to address specific potential risks associated with transmission of SARS-CoV-2 during implant therapy. It also considers the risks of not proceeding with therapy due to COVID-19 period restrictions. The full SAC Classification should be completed in a normal manner to ensure that implant risk assessment as well as identification of relevant modifying factors are addressed.

Modifying factors for COVID-19 period risk assessment	Degree of impact on decision to commence and or continue implant therapy		
	Low	Moderate	High
Health system capability			
Alert level Response to rate of transmission (national, regional or local)	Reducing restrictions	General circulation but managed rate of transmission	Uncontrolled community transmission
Detection National systems and procedures	Few or no active cases for > 2 weeks in the region	Some active cases and low-level community transmission. Effective test and quarantine systems	No or limited testing and tracing
Prevention/ability to manage Health care services in place	Vaccine	Effective treatment or quarantine regimes	Material risk of healthcare services being overwhelmed
Dental operating level Implications for extent of permitted dental services	No restrictions	Restricted, including implant therapy	Emergencies only
Personal protective equipment (PPE) Availability of recommended PPE	Full	Restricted. Where supply is limited and prioritization of use is needed	Insufficient
Epidemiological risk status			
COVID-19 risk Risk of COVID-19 transmission by patient with active disease	No known risk factors or symptoms	Possible recent contact with infected person and or recovering patient within last 14 days. Recent travel to known hot-spot.	Symptomatic patient +/- confirmed positive test

Modifying factors for COVID-19 period risk assessment	Degree of impact on decision to commence and or continue implant therapy		
	Low	Moderate	High
Patient risk status			
Age	≤ 59	60-69 with co-morbidities	≥ 70
Member of an identified at-risk group Refer to local guidelines	No	Yes, for example, increased high body mass index	Complete shielding group e.g. confined to home
Co-morbidity Refer to local guidelines	None	Non-cardiac/respiratory system problems, e.g. diabetes mellitus	Cardiac/respiratory problems Immunocompromised Active cancer
Aerosol risk			
Routine examination and maintenance Procedures, techniques and equipment that carry potential for AGP and or AGE	Examination	Investigations that could lead to coughing or gagging e.g. intraoral radiographs	Use of air-powered-water-and-powder equipment for biofilm removal
Prosthetic Procedures, techniques and equipment that carry potential for AGP and or AGE	Restorative procedures with no need for irrigational cleaning	Restorative procedures that could lead to coughing or gagging e.g. impressions	Restorative procedures where use of water-cooled high-speed or 3-in-1 combined air/water is unavoidable
Surgical placement and related procedures Procedures, techniques and equipment that carry potential for AGP and or AGE	Straightforward implant placement using speed-reducing handpiece with peristaltic pump irrigation		Use of piezo surgery

Modifying factors for COVID-19 period risk assessment	Degree of impact on decision to commence and or continue implant therapy		
	Low	Moderate	High

Covid-19 period considerations for implant therapy¹

Timing of extraction Is the time point of extraction and implant placement critical to minimising risk of an adverse outcome?	No		Yes
Urgent intra-treatment care Does the management of an intra-treatment complication require urgent attention?	No		Yes
Prosthetic review Requirement and timing of follow-up appointments	Not critical		Critical in event of prosthetic complications
Surgical review Requirement and timing of follow-up appointments	Not critical		Critical in event of surgical complications

¹ This section assesses the risks of not treating the patient or delaying needed treatment due to COVID-19 restrictions



Become a member of the ITI

The ITI is a global association of professionals in implant dentistry with almost 20,000 Fellows and Members worldwide. Our Purpose is to engage and inspire the global dental profession to strive for excellence in implant dentistry for the benefit of the patient. Our

Mission is to serve the dental profession by providing a growing global network for life-long learning in implant dentistry through comprehensive quality education and innovative research for the benefit of the patient.

Education	Network	Service
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full access to >750 e-learning modules • Discounts on all ITI events and education programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • >700 Study Clubs worldwide • ITI social network • National & regional Section activities • Membership Certificate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unlimited use of SAC Assessment Tool • Speaker toolkit

Register online today: <https://www.iti.org/membership>

