

 Nevada Dental Benefits, Ltd.®

a PRIMECARE<sup>SM</sup> company  
BENEFITS

# Aspect

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A QUARTERLY NEWS BULLETIN

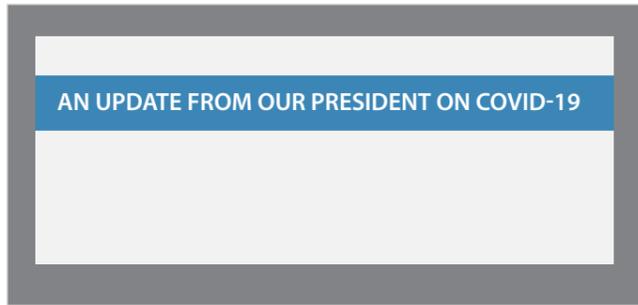
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*Great Health Starts Here*®

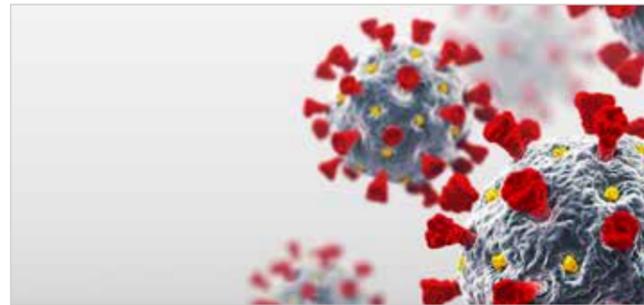
**Autumn 2020**  
**ISSUE 3**

Welcome to Aspect, Nevada Dental Benefits, Ltd.'s quarterly news bulletin, through which we offer contemporary news information on oral health, the dental industry, the latest research and advice for providers.

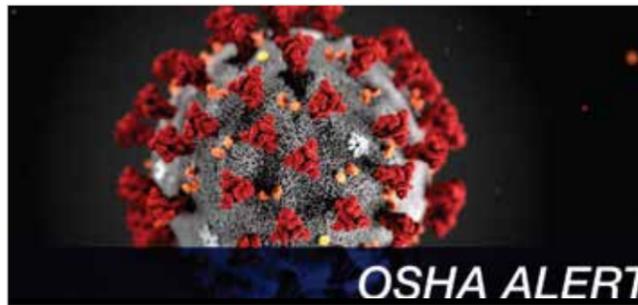
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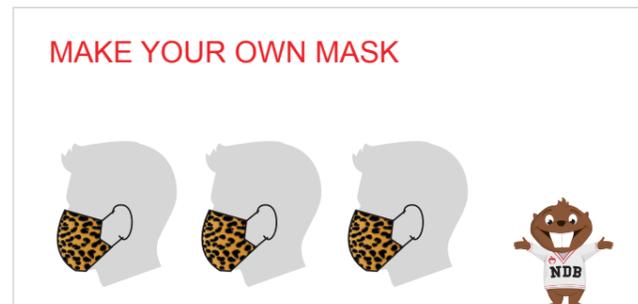
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## AN UPDATE FROM OUR PRESIDENT ON COVID-19

Dear PrimeCare Community,

As COVID-19 (coronavirus) continues to impact our community, I want to personally update you on the protective actions we're taking. For us, there is no higher priority than the health of our staff, members, clients and providers.

PrimeCare Benefits (PCB) continues to maintain temporary measures to keep employees, members and their families safe from COVID-19 (coronavirus). While some staff members have returned to the office, a majority are still working remotely. PCB remains fully staffed and will maintain normal office hours from 8 A.M. - 5:30 P.M. There will be no disruptions to our call center for members, providers and clients due to this change. All telephone calls will continue to be answered, as well as emails and faxes received.

In an effort to protect our community, PrimeCare is not allowing any visitors to our office. We understand that this may be inconvenient, but believe it is in the best interest of all to keep in-person interactions to a minimum.

**Walk-In Service** for members and providers will remain closed. We will not receive hand delivered claims from provider offices. Provider checks will not be available for on-site pick up. Checks will be mailed to addresses on file.

We will continue to work with and follow all guidance and protocols issued by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), state and local public health departments as the situation continues to evolve.

At PrimeCare Benefits, we value your relationship and sincerely hope you and your loved ones are staying healthy and safe during this challenging time.

For questions and inquiries, contact us at <https://nevadadentalbenefits.com/contact.php>.

Sincerely,



**Fred L. Horowitz, DMD**  
President

COVID-19 pandemic updates are changing at a rapid pace. Click the resource links below to find the most up-to-date information on Nevada and the United States.

## COVID-19 RESOURCE GUIDE

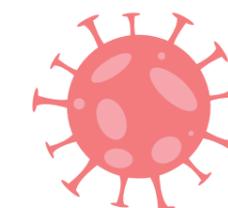
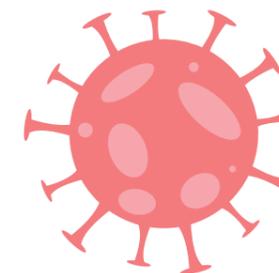
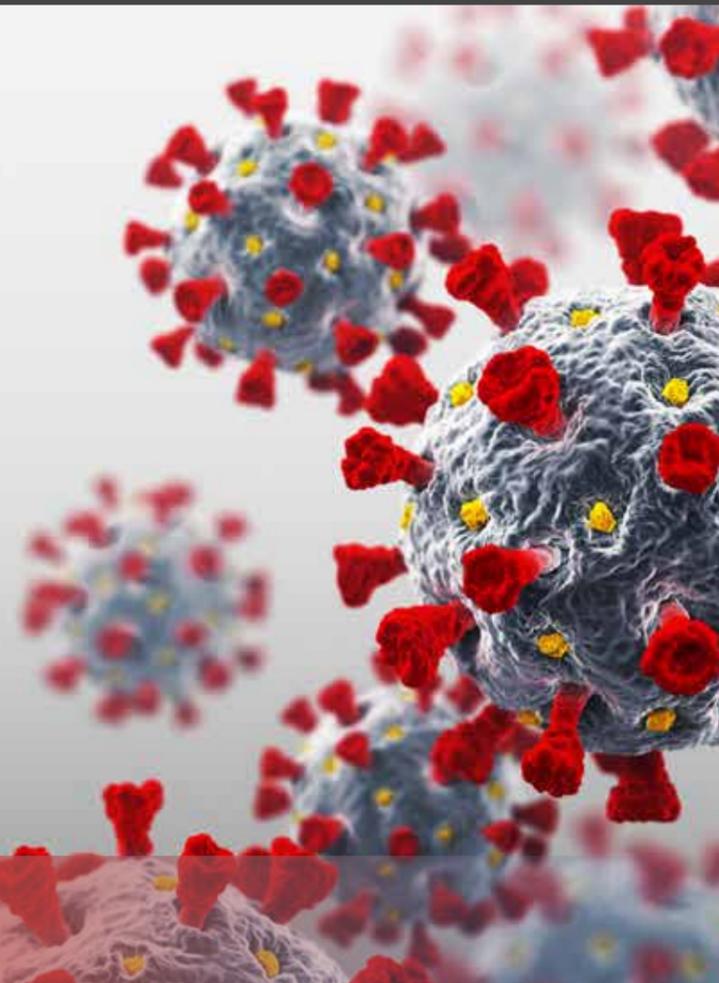
### NEVADA

- ▶ [Nevada State Board of Dental Examiners](#)
- ▶ [Nevada Health Response](#)
- ▶ [Southern Nevada Health District](#)

### UNITED STATES

- ▶ [ADA Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Center for Dentists](#)
- ▶ [Center for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- ▶ [U.S. Small Business Administration](#)

Nevada Dental Benefits, Ltd. is not endorsing or vouching for the information provided by the above third parties. These website links are being provided as convenient resources for dentists.



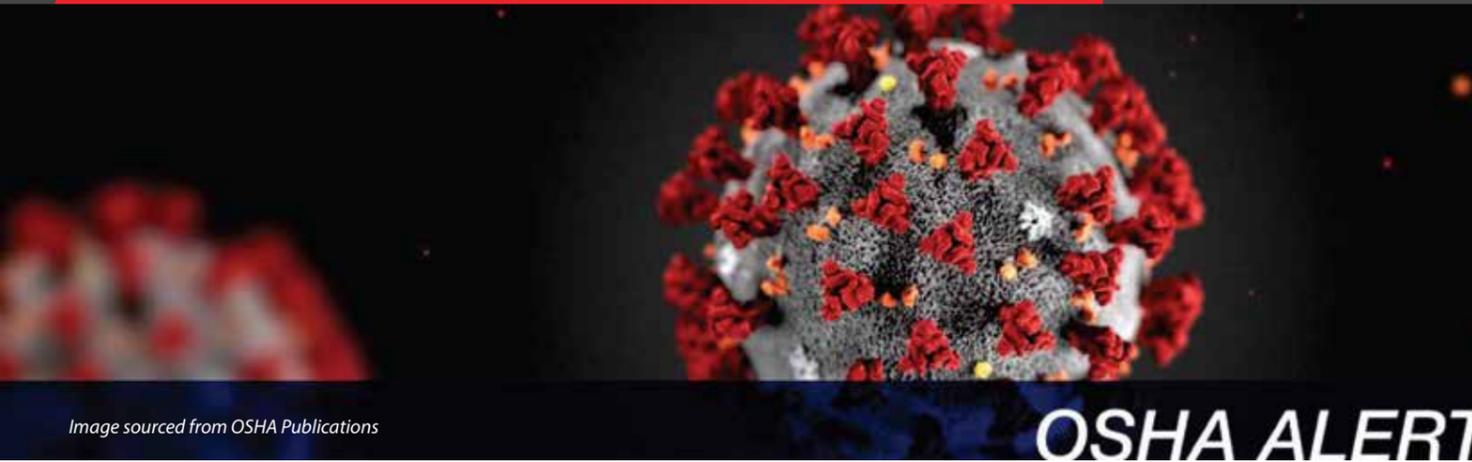


Image sourced from OSHA Publications

## COVID-19 Guidance for Dental Practitioners

OSHA is committed to protecting the health and safety of America’s workers and workplaces during these unprecedented times. The agency will be issuing a series of industry-specific alerts designed to help keep workers safe.

If you are a dental practitioner, the following tips can help reduce the risk of exposure to the coronavirus:

- Encourage workers to stay home if sick.
- Maximize use of telemedicine for non-emergency consultations, and prioritize urgent and emergency procedures.
- Install physical barriers or partitions between patient treatment areas.
- Provide adequate ventilation and airflow in patient treatment areas so that air moves away from staff work areas.
- Frequently clean and disinfect surfaces and equipment with hospital-grade Environmental Protection Agency-approved cleaning chemicals from [List N](#) that have label claims against the coronavirus.
- Minimize the number of staff present when aerosol-generating procedures are performed, and ensure staff who are present are appropriately protected.
- Provide appropriate personal protective equipment, such as eye goggles, face shields, and N95 respirators, as necessary to protect dental practitioners and support personnel.
- Encourage workers to report any safety and health concerns.

For more information, visit [www.osha.gov/coronavirus](http://www.osha.gov/coronavirus) or call 1-800-321-OSHA (6742). Visit this [link](#) for more detailed guidance for dental industry workers.

*OSHA issues alerts to draw attention to worker safety and health issues and solutions.*

# AMALGAM SEPARATORS REMINDER – IT’S NOT TOO LATE!

The Environmental Protection Agency regulations require all dental practices to install amalgam separators and recycle the waste in accordance with manufacturers’ guidelines.

**The deadline was July 14, 2020**

You can still take advantage of no cost amalgam separators, an offer Nevada Dental Benefits and PrimeCare Administrators is offering to network dentists through Dental Recycling of North America. [Click here](#) to see the flyer mailed out to network providers last Fall, and posted in the Winter issue of ASPECT, that includes details on how to sign up.

# Cancer Prevention Through HPV Vaccination: An Action Guide for Dental Health Care Providers

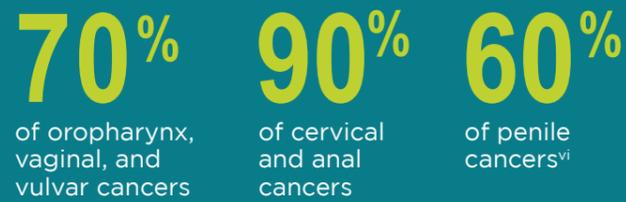
You have the power to reduce the incidence of human papillomavirus (HPV) cancers and pre-cancers among patients in your care. **HPV cancer prevention starts with you.**

Oral health professionals play a critical role in combating growing rates of HPV-positive oropharyngeal cancers, which affect the tonsils and the base of the tongue. **Oral health professionals should strongly and clearly recommend HPV vaccination to all age-eligible patients.**

## The Problem

**HPV-positive oropharyngeal cancer has surpassed cervical cancer as the most prevalent HPV cancer.** Certain strains of HPV cause 70% of oropharyngeal cancers in the U.S., affecting about 11,600 people each year. One in nine American men have oral HPV,<sup>i</sup> and cancers of the oropharynx are about four times more common in men than women.<sup>ii</sup> Oral HPV has been detected in newborns when the mother has an HPV cervical infection,<sup>iii</sup> and research shows that 2.5% of adolescents have HPV.<sup>iv</sup> Although most cases of HPV resolve without incident, HPV causes about 31,500 cases of cancer in men and women each year in the U.S., including cancers in the oropharynx, cervix, vagina, vulva, penis, and anus.<sup>v</sup>

## HPV is linked with:



### High-Risk Factors for Oropharyngeal Cancer<sup>vii,viii</sup>

- Chewing tobacco
- Heavy smoking (more than a pack a day)
- Chronic inflammation
- Having a weakened immune system
- Poor oral hygiene
- Current marijuana use
- Having 16 or more lifetime vaginal or oral sex partners
- Men with two or more same-sex oral sex partners

## The Solution

**The HPV vaccine is cancer prevention.** Boys and girls should get the HPV vaccine series at age 11 or 12. The vaccine can be given starting as early as age 9. The HPV vaccine is most effective when given before age 13 to achieve the best immune response, and it provides long-lasting protection.<sup>ix</sup> For patients who were not vaccinated on time at 11–12, vaccination may be provided up to age 26 for females and males.

**HPV vaccination works.** The HPV vaccine prevents infection by the HPV types that cause the vast majority of HPV cancers and genital warts. In fact, infections with the HPV types that cause most HPV cancers and genital warts have dropped 71% among teen girls since children first started getting the vaccine in 2006.<sup>x</sup>



It is estimated that approximately 90% of the newly diagnosed HPV-attributable cancers in the United States could be prevented by receipt of the HPV vaccine,<sup>xi</sup> and there is evidence that the vaccine may help prevent oral HPV infections.<sup>xii</sup> [Get more facts.](#)<sup>2</sup>

**Educate patients and parents of age-eligible children about the link between HPV and oropharyngeal cancers, and advocate for HPV vaccination as cancer prevention.** With the annual number of oropharyngeal cancers on the rise, dental providers play an important role in educating their patients about ways to prevent this type of cancer. You and your colleagues should understand and encourage HPV vaccination. On the pages that follow, you will find a list of actionable steps you can take to reduce the burden of HPV cancers within your community **today**.

## ACTIONS DENTAL PROVIDERS CAN TAKE

### Action 1 Know your unique role

Dental providers play a unique role<sup>3</sup> in HPV cancer prevention. Although dental providers cannot screen for oral HPV, you can reduce the incidence by promoting HPV vaccination.

- View this [short video](#)<sup>4</sup> from the National HPV Vaccination Roundtable for more information about HPV and oropharyngeal cancer.
- Read the American Dental Association (ADA) Council on Scientific Affairs' [statement](#),<sup>5</sup> which urges dentists to educate themselves and their patients about the connection between HPV and oropharyngeal cancer.
- Build on your existing practices. Dental providers are already involved in secondary and tertiary prevention (e.g., nutrition and tobacco counseling). Offering primary prevention in dental offices is a logical and clinically appropriate approach.<sup>xiii</sup>
- Capitalize on patient visits. Adolescent patients tend to see the dentist twice yearly, which may be more often than they see their primary care provider—this is a window of opportunity for dental professionals to provide counseling to parents about the HPV vaccine and HPV's link to oral cancer.<sup>xiv</sup>
- Consider how you can take active measures suggested by the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry's [policy statement](#)<sup>6</sup> on HPV vaccination.

### Action 2 Practice cancer prevention

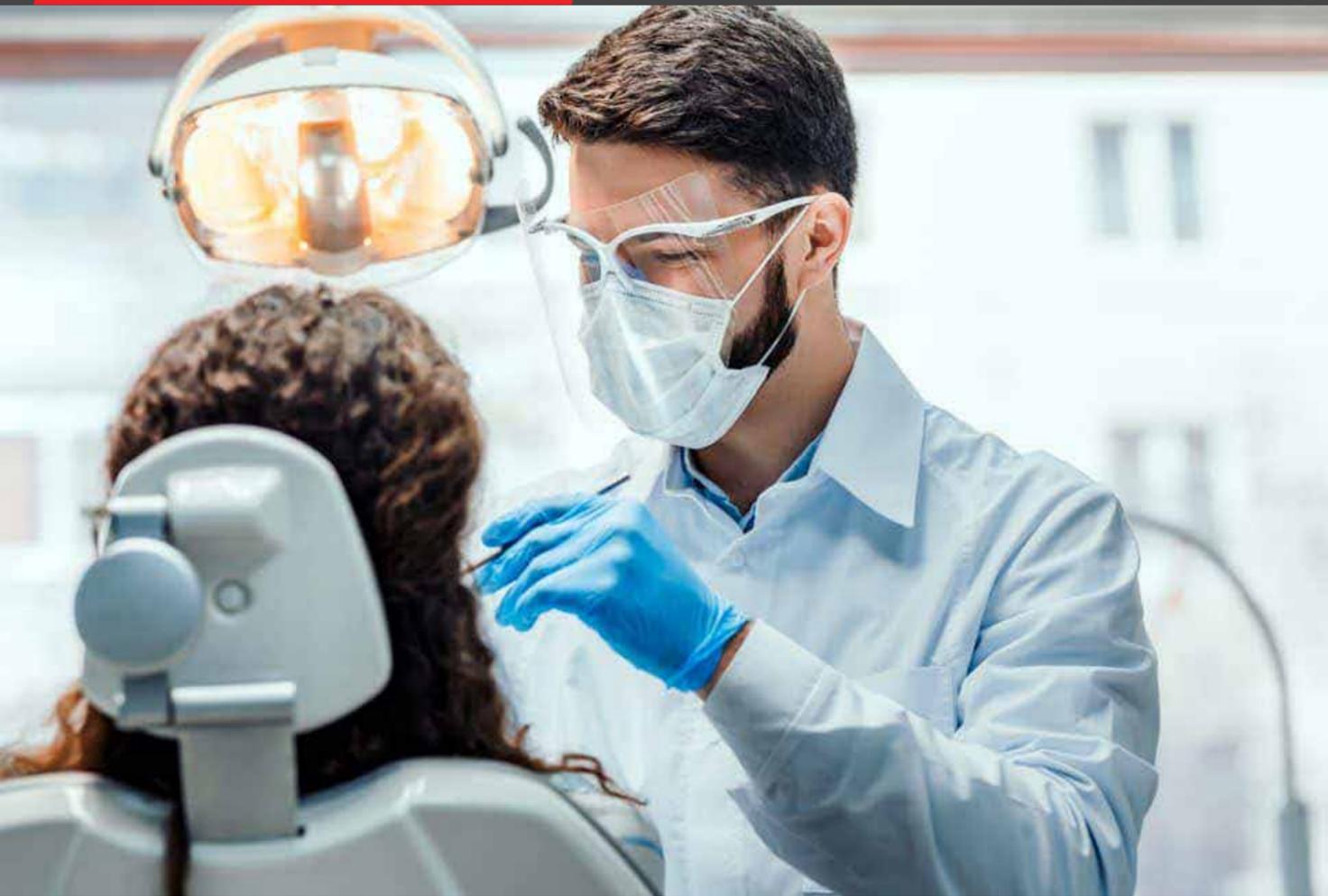
Parents may be unaware of the link between HPV and oral cancer. **Educate parents of your pediatric patients**<sup>7</sup> (starting around age 9 or 10) about the risks of HPV and the importance of getting the HPV vaccine by reinforcing that **the HPV vaccine is cancer prevention**.

- Post information in patient waiting rooms.
- Include a question about immunizations on the medical history form.
- Begin the discussion about the HPV vaccine while taking your patient's comprehensive health history and when performing routine oral cancer screenings. Tell your patients that oral exams include looking for possible physical symptoms (lumps and bumps).

- Emphasize that cancer prevention begins with the parent.
- Learn tips for talking to parents about the HPV vaccine,<sup>8</sup> and be prepared to answer their questions.
- Include HPV cancer prevention information on your [website](#)<sup>9</sup> and social media pages. Suggest parents visit the [HPV Cancer Free Family](#)<sup>10</sup> Facebook group where members of the National HPV Vaccination Roundtable can answer parents' questions, or follow the Roundtable's [Twitter page](#).<sup>11</sup>



To view the entire flyer, [click here](#).



### ULTRAVIOLET LIGHT SHOWS WHERE PPE FAILURES OCCUR

Melissa Busch | DrBicuspid.com

May 11, 2020 - Dental teams who are fortunate enough to have personal protective equipment (PPE) need to ensure they are using it properly to shield against viruses, such as the one causing COVID-19. Many healthcare workers improperly use PPE, according to an article published April 24 in *Medical Education*.

Healthcare workers participated in a training exercise in which they wore full PPE to treat a pretend patient sprayed with a simulated contagion. Once they finished the exercise, ultraviolet light showed that they exposed themselves to infections by failing to put on or take off PPE properly, the researchers wrote.

"It vividly demonstrated how aerosol-generating procedures can lead to exposure if proper technique and procedures are not followed," wrote the group, led by Patrick Hughes, DO, of the Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, FL.

The effectiveness of PPE has been in question since reports surfaced of front-line workers contracting COVID-19 despite wearing suggested protective gear. This, a PPE shortage across the U.S., and a lack of clear guidance from the U.S. government have left individual states making the calls in terms of prevention and protection.

Despite the number of COVID-19 cases and deaths continuing to climb, some states have lifted their stay-at-home mandates, leaving businesses, such as dental practices, scrambling to open safely and their employees on edge. Though no regulatory body or agency has given concrete instruction as to how dentists and their teams should proceed, the ADA issued interim guidance in April, which aligns with existing recommendations from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Dentists in states that are considering reopening should exercise professional judgment and carefully consider the availability of appropriate PPE to minimize the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

#### If you got it, use it right

The simulated training aimed to give workers a refresher in putting on and taking off PPE and to assure them that if they use it correctly, the equipment is effective, according to the authors.

For the experiment, Dr. Hughes and colleagues placed a highlighter refill in a warm water bath for 15 minutes to create a nontoxic fluorescent solution, which was only visible under ultraviolet light.

Healthcare workers were instructed to put on PPE, consisting of caps, gowns, surgical gloves, eye protection, face shields, and N95 masks. Once dressed in PPE, the workers went into a room to care for a patient, which was a mannequin sprayed down with the invisible fake contagion. The fluorescent solution was also added to a simulated albuterol nebulizer treatment that was given to the high-fidelity simulator during the event, which did not occur in a negative pressure room.

After treating the patient, the healthcare workers, still wearing their PPE, were taken to a room where the lights were off. With a black light, the researchers identified the simulated contagion on the workers' gloves and gowns due to their direct contact with the simulated patient. The contagion was also found on their face shields and masks due to them treating the mannequin with the aerosolized solution.

After the workers removed their PPE, the light revealed that the fluorescent solution was found on the staff members' skin. This indicated they were exposed to the simulated contagion, and the transmission was due to improper PPE use. The most common error by healthcare workers was contaminating their faces and forearms when removing their PPE, according to the authors.

#### Reduce exposure with training

This simulated exercise provided an efficient, low-cost way to demonstrate that PPE training improves workplace safety and reduces the risk of transmission, the authors wrote.

"By providing learners visual evidence of protection during patient encounters with high-risk aerosol-generating procedures, this innovative training method inspires trust in their training and PPE," they wrote.

To view the online article, [click here](#).

# MAKE YOUR OWN MASK

Wearing a mask to the grocery store and other places is the new normal these days. Grab your favorite fabric and make a statement in minutes. Here's a quick tutorial on how to make your own non-sewn face covering.

## Materials You'll Need :



**Bandana, old t-shirt, or square cotton cloth**  
(cut approximately 20"x20")

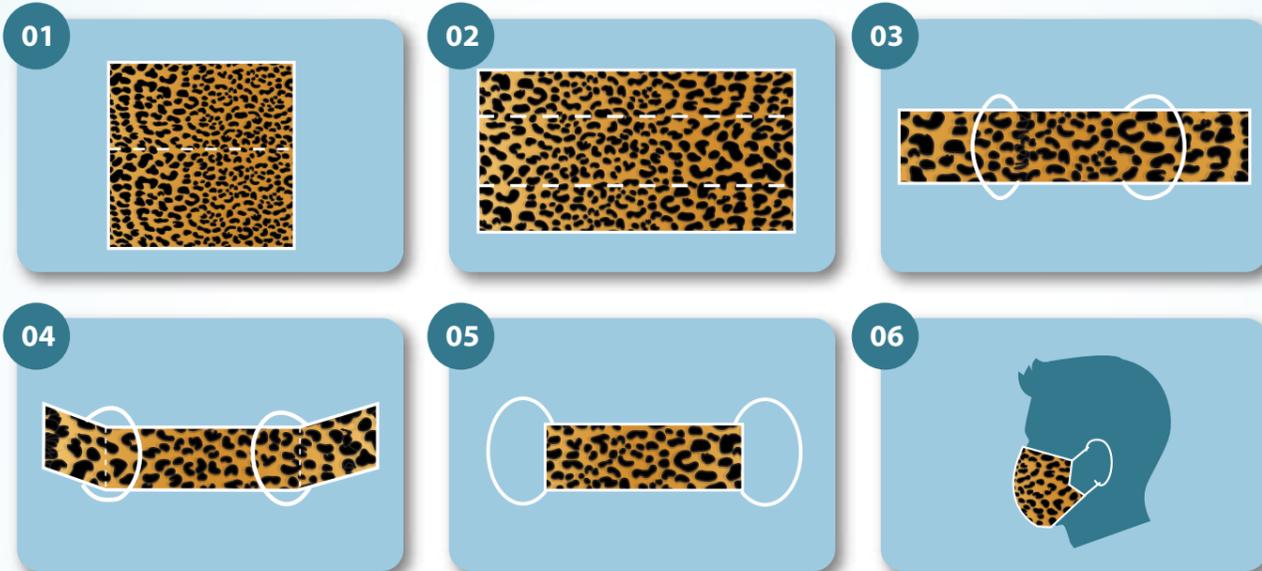


**Rubber bands**  
(or hair ties)



**Scissors**  
(if you're cutting your own cloth)

## Tutorial :



### Make sure your cloth face covering:

- ▶ Fits snugly but comfortably against the side of the face
- ▶ Completely covers the nose and mouth
- ▶ Is secured with ties or ear loops
- ▶ Includes multiple layers of fabric
- ▶ Allows for breathing without restriction
- ▶ Can be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape

See more about how to [wear](#) and [wash](#) your cloth face covering.

[Click here](#) for full details on making a **sewn cloth face covering** and for details on who should not use face coverings. Cloth face coverings are NOT surgical masks or N-95 respirators.



Please meet Dr. Gurpreet Khairah (Dr. Raj), Owner and General Dentist at Discover Smiles Dental. Originally from India, Dr. Raj graduated with a Doctor in Dental Surgery from University of the Pacific in San Francisco, CA. After graduating in 2006, he visited Las Vegas for an office trip and decided to make it his permanent home in 2007. After 12 years in group practice, Dr. Raj was excited to open Discover Smiles Dental in 2019.



**NDB: Flashback to when you were 10 years old. What did you want to be when you grew up?**

**GK:** Growing up, I wanted to be an Astronaut. However, I became highly inspired by my older cousin who was attending dental school, and he always spoke about how rewarding it was to practice dentistry.

**NDB: When you're not at work, what are some of your favorite things to do?**

**GK:** My favorite things to do in town are trying new restaurants and playing golf with my friends.

**NDB: Do you have any funny dentistry stories you'd like to share?**

**GK:** I have a ton of fun dental stories to tell, but there is one that especially stands out. I had prepped a bridge on a patient who had declined to schedule his next appointment before he left the office, even though he had been informed that the bridge would be delivered in two weeks. The patient called 3 weeks later and was very upset. He had been checking his mailbox and had been on the lookout for his bridge because he thought his permanent bridge was going to be delivered to his home. That experience taught me that it's extremely important to educate patients and be very specific when speaking to them.



If you know of a dentist that might like to be featured in one of our upcoming news bulletins, please let us know. Email Crystal Robbins at [crobbs@nevadadentalbenefits.com](mailto:crobbs@nevadadentalbenefits.com)





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