



Strengthening Your Practice Amidst Uncertainty

Guidelines for the COVID-19 Crisis

Helping You Move Forward

myOrthos is committed to supporting growth and independence in the orthodontic industry. We know these uncertain times can be especially daunting to a solo practitioner, so we've compiled our learnings and resources to help individual practices survive and thrive during this crisis and into the future.

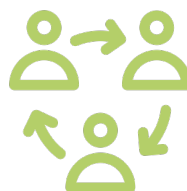
We hope this guide will provide ideas and strategies to keep your practice strong. And most importantly, we hope this reminds you that you're not alone in this crisis. **We're in this together.**



How Can I Support My Employees?

Your employees are likely worried about the financial impact of this crisis, as well as their family's health. For many, the loss of income is a looming threat as offices are closing. It's more important than ever to communicate and provide support to your team during this time.

Support can be through **financial assistance**, **engagement** and **communication**.



Employee Support: Financial Assistance

- Financial assistance may include an employee relief fund to help with unexpected expenses, especially if employees are not being paid during this time, or you may be able to continue paying employees partial pay even if the office is closed.
- If you qualify for the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, you may be able to recoup some of this pay through tax credits.
- There are also state and federal resources for financial assistance that you can share with your employees. Expensify is currently providing a \$50 grocery reimbursement for families using the SNAP card.

Employee Support: Engagement



- Engagement is critical during this time as people are isolated.
- You may want to consider regular Zoom meetings to give the team a chance to chat face to face and feel more connected. Our coworkers are often like family to us! A basic account is free and you can host video conference calls for up to 40 minutes at a time. Create an account here: <https://zoom.us/>

Employee Support: Communication



- Communication will keep your team informed and up to speed on a constantly changing environment.
- Hearing from you regularly reassures your team that you're present, engaged, and working hard to keep the business afloat. Consider a daily or weekly communication with updates.

How Can I Support My Patients?

Most patient concerns will fall into these three areas:

- 1 Will this closure impact my treatment time?
- 2 Will the office be clean and safe upon reopening?
- 3 How can I pay if I lose my job?



Patient Support: **Treatment Time**



- Try to reschedule patients to come in as soon as possible upon reopening. Can you add extra hours or days to accommodate the patient demand that builds up?
- Ultimately, you want to keep patients on schedule with their treatment as much as possible. Consider any appointments that you might be able to do virtually, using Zoom or another technology tool.
- We've learned that consults and retainer checks can be good virtual appointments. Even just a "check in" video appointment can help you evaluate your patient and talk to them about any concerns. Virtual appointments will help your patient feel more connected and help you make the best use of your schedule.

Patient Support: Office Sanitization

- You've probably already added in extra sanitizing and cleaning efforts for your office, but you can use this time to do a deep clean. Create a list of tasks and rotate employees in one or 2 at a time throughout the week.
- Consider additional precautions you can take once reopening. Should you remove magazines from the office? Have patients wait in the car until their appointment time? Add extra hand sanitizing stations?
- The [AAO](#) is a great resource for recommendations on clinical and general patient areas. Be sure to train your staff on these processes and communicate the changes to your patients.

Patient Support: Financial Concern

- Financial concerns are on everybody's mind right now, including your patients. Many of them are facing job cuts and losses and may be worried about how to continue paying for orthodontic care.
- Be as flexible as you can during this time. Can you extend payments out for a few more months to lower the monthly fee? Can you split the monthly payment into 2 payments?
- If patients are behind, tax refunds and the upcoming stimulus package may be able to help them catch up.

How Can I Maintain or Strengthen My Business?

Just because you're not seeing patients doesn't mean you can't grow and support your orthodontic practice during this time. If you are still able to pay employees, you should try to make this time as productive as possible.



- Patients (both existing and new) will still be calling. **Try to have someone dedicated to handling phone calls and responding to online messages.** In addition to handling inbound calls, make sure you are contacting and rescheduling any patients with appointments during the closure.



- **Virtual training is a great use of this downtime.** There are many online and inexpensive options for training your team on everything from answering phones to presenting a financial plan. Schedule some training to refresh existing skills and build upon new ones.



- **Refresh your office.** If you are not under a shelter in place directive, spend some time doing a full spring clean in your office. You would be surprised at the clutter than accumulates over time. Take a fresh view as if you were a new patient coming in for the first time.



- Continue Marketing! People are at home with time on their hands. **Continue promoting your practice online and scheduling new patients for when the office reopens.** Just as with existing patients, consider offering a Virtual Consult to introduce the new patient to the doctors and team members.

This is an unprecedented time for our communities and the orthodontic industry. **It's more important than ever to support each other to keep the orthodontic community strong and focused on excellent patient care.**

Sincerely,

The **myOrthos** Team

We're in this TOGETHER!

myOrthos is an OSO, an orthodontic service organization, and the only orthodontist-only dental service organization in the Northeast. Our mission is to support orthodontic independence and individualized patient care with a scalable business infrastructure. Learn more about us at myOrthos.com.



Thank
You

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