

How Dental Offices Sterilize

Peace of mind for dental procedures



Oral health is critical. As you return to the dentist or head to a specialist for a dental implant or other procedure, you may have questions about sterilization procedures in the office.

Here's some guidance and topics to discuss with your dental professional to help make your visit easier:

ADA and Cleaning and Sterilization guidelines

All dental professionals are required to use a cleaning and sterilization process that meets **ADA and CDC sterilization guidelines**.^{1,2} These are stringent sterilization processes that help keep your dentist's office safe for all patients.

Here are some methods of cleaning your dental professional may use:

- **Mechanical instrument cleaning** with locked cassettes to eliminate touching while cleaning
- **Ultrasonic cleaning devices** that use sound waves to clean instruments
- **Instrument Washers** that use high-velocity hot water and detergent to clean instruments
- **Tabletop steam sterilizers** that generate their own steam when distilled or deionized water is added

Instrument Examination & Packaging

In addition to the cleaning and sterilization process, your dental professional's office will physically examine the instruments and make sure they are in good working and sealed in sterile packaging until they are ready to be used.

Office Sterilization

Dental professionals routinely keep a sterile office for their patients and frequently sanitize surfaces that you may come in contact during a visit. They promote frequent hand washing in the office and use masks and alcohol-based sanitizers.

Your health is the utmost concern from any health professional, and it would be the same for your dental professional. If you have any concerns, contact your local dental professional for more specific information.

¹ <https://www.ada.org/en/member-center/oral-health-topics/infection-control-resources>

² <https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/disinfection/index.html>