

Health Risks with Aerosol-Generating Procedures (AGP) in Dentistry

The Chief Dental Officer of Canada
Update Report 2020-09-16*



Government of Canada
Gouvernement du Canada

“Oral health care commonly involves aerosol-generating and droplet-generating procedures due to the use of high and slow-speed handpieces (drills) and procedures such as ultrasonic scaling [dental cleaning/scaling] and tooth extraction.”

“ there is good reason to believe that aerosol- and droplet-generating procedures are potential sources of transmission”

“...dental hand pieces do generate aerosols and that a wide range of bacteria, fungi and viruses are contained in the aerosols.”

“a cohort study investigated levels of atmospheric microbial contamination before, during and after dental procedures and observed that contaminated aerosol levels increased four-fold during treatments compared to before treatments and remained elevated after work ceased, although less than during treatments.”

“We identified two other studies with indirectly related evidence that could further inform the subject of AGPs in dentistry. A systematic review investigating infection of health care workers when performing different tracheal manipulation treatments on patients with acute respiratory diseases such as SARS reported that tracheal intubation, ventilation techniques and tracheotomy all resulted in increased risk of infection for such workers.”

* Evidence to support safe return to clinical practice by oral health professionals in Canada during the COVID-19 pandemic: A report prepared for the Office of the Chief Dental Officer of Canada. Section F. September 16, 2020 <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/health.html>
