

IMPORTANT NOTICE REGARDING INFECTION CONTROL PRACTICES AND USE OF GLOVES

Hawaii Administrative Rules § 16-79-8 states dentists and dental hygienists, as well as dental assistants, must practice levels of infection control consistent with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”). In addition, the U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Safety and Health Administration (“OSHA”), State of Hawaii Department of Labor and Industrial Relations Occupational Safety and Health (“HIOSH”), and the American Dental Association recommendations and guidelines should also be followed.

Concerning general glove use, the CDC indicates the following:

- 1) Wear medical gloves when a potential exists for contacting blood, saliva, other potential infectious materials (OPIM), or mucous membranes.
- 2) Wear sterile surgeons' gloves when performing oral surgical procedures.
- 3) Wear a new pair of medical gloves for each patient, remove them promptly after use, and wash hands immediately to avoid transfer of microorganisms to other patients or the environment.
- 4) Remove gloves that are torn, cut, or punctured as soon as feasible and wash hands before re-gloving.
- 5) Do not wash surgeons' or patient examination gloves before use or wash, disinfect, or sterilize gloves for re-use.
- 6) Ensure that appropriate gloves in the correct size are readily accessible. This includes vinyl gloves in proper size be available for all dental personnel who may be allergic to latex gloves as well as for use on patients who have a similar allergy.
- 7) Use appropriate gloves (e.g., puncture- or chemical-resistant utility gloves) when cleaning instruments and performing housekeeping tasks involving contact with blood or OPIM.
- 8) Consult with glove manufacturers regarding the chemical compatibility of glove materials with hand hygiene products as well as the dental materials being used.

The Hawaii State Board of Dental Examiners has opined the purpose of gloves is to create a barrier between the dental health-care personnel and the patient. Using, removing, and re-using gloves for the same patient destroys that barrier and is inconsistent with CDC guidelines and recommendations.

The Hawaii State Board of Dental Examiners recommends all practitioners familiarize themselves with licensing laws and rules and the information on infection control available at www.cdc.gov/oralhealth; <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/dentistry/index.html>; <http://labor.hawaii.gov/hiosh/safety-and-health/>; <http://www.ada.org/en/>