

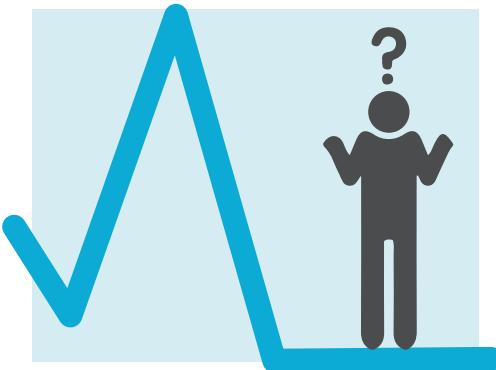
# PREPARING TO REOPEN: How To Beat The Competition



Coleman, Ureda, Alford & Kaucher, P.A.

As dental practices plan for reopening, many will rush to fill their schedule with a backlog of existing patients. We're going to tell you why that strategy could be your **biggest mistake**.

## EXISTING PATIENTS AND YOUR SCHEDULE

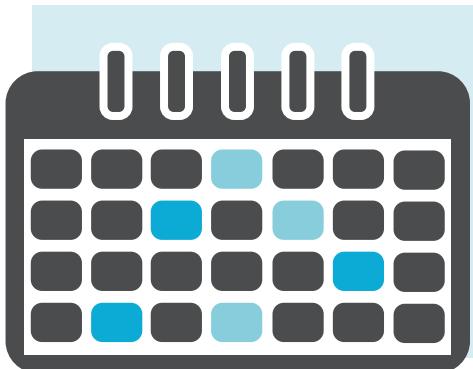


**Every December, dental offices fill up their schedules with existing patients looking to use up insurance benefits before the end of the year.** But what happens next? Practices see a noticeable dip in their new patient numbers since new patients have to wait weeks to be seen.

**How does this relate to the Post-Covid reopening?** Imagine that December pattern on a larger scale now. Offices have been completely shut down for over a month (except for some emergency care) and many patients have had to either wait or forgo treatment all-together during this period. Once offices open back up, existing patients will be the first ones calling in, trying to get their appointments in the books.

**Sounds like an awesome problem to have, right?** At first it's going to be great to have such a full schedule. But there will come a time when you've gone through your entire patient-base and your hygiene schedule will look emptier than a cookie jar in a kindergarten classroom.

## THE KEY TO SUCCESS: SMART SCHEDULING



**Strategize between high-value patients and hygiene.** We think you need to balance seeing high-value existing patients, patients who have important needs and new patients. Don't book the first patient you can get in the first appointment window. Be strategic! If a patient has been with you for three years and have no pressing needs. They can wait for July.

**Block time in your schedule for new patients.** If a new patient contacts your office, don't shoehorn them into the back of the line. Studies show that on average, new patients expect to be seen within 3 business days. If an office can't accomodate that, they will simply call the next office that can. Use Smart Scheduling to create purposeful gaps in your schedule that are left specifically for new patient appointments!

## BONUS TIP: FOCUS ON COSMETIC DENTISTRY



**Cosmetic Dentistry Demand Has Held Steady.** The truth is, many people have been bored sitting at home, which has given them time to reflect on their smile and nitpick all the little imperfections in their teeth. They have been using this time to research some of the treatments they have been considering.

**Show Off Your Expertise.** Do you have videos or before-and-after photos showcasing patients who have done cosmetic work across the front six? If so, show them off! Add them to your website, social media and Google listing. Social validation is very important when it comes to cosmetic dentistry.

**Give priority to cosmetic patients.** We believe there will be some pent up demand for cosmetic dentistry. We believe offices who don't use smart scheduling will be busy servicing existing and low-value patients. This will create an opportunity for smart offices to capitalize on that demand.