

### **Background**

Peel Public Health is advising anyone who received dental services at Alforat Dental Center (located at 2395 Cawthra Rd., Unit #1, in Mississauga, Ontario) from February 2014 to September 19, 2019 to be tested, as a precaution, for bloodborne infections. Former and current patients can use the [lab requisition \(PDF\)](#) to take their health care provider.

### **What dental office/location is being investigated?**

The investigation is related to Alforat Dental Center located at 2395 Cawthra Rd., Unit #1, in Mississauga, Ontario.

### **What is the issue and when was it discovered?**

On September 17, 2019, Peel Public Health received a complaint regarding infection prevention and control (IPAC) practices at the privately-owned Alforat Dental Center. The investigation began the same day and an on-site inspection was conducted on September 20, 2019 and issues with the cleaning, sterilization and storage of dental equipment was determined.

### **Why is the clinic operating today? Is it safe to go there now?**

Peel Public Health worked with the Alforat clinic team to bring practices into compliance with provincial IPAC standards. The clinic was reopened on October 7, 2019 after demonstrating compliance with provincial infection prevention and control standards.

### **What are IPAC standards?**

IPAC standards are “infection prevention and control” guidelines to prevent infections. An IPAC lapse occurs when infection prevention and control standards (such as proper cleaning, disinfection, sterilization, and storage of re-usable equipment) are not followed, putting patients at risk.

### **What were they doing wrong at the dental office?**

During an inspection of Alforat Dental Center on September 20, 2019, Peel Public Health found that the clinic was not adhering to standards for cleaning, sterilizing and storing dental instruments.

### **Have there been any cases of infection related to this dental clinic?**

Peel Public Health is currently not aware of any cases of infection related to the Alforat Dental Center.

**Alforat Cosmetic Center is located in the same unit as Alforat Dental Center. I received treatment at the Cosmetic Center; should I be concerned?**

No. The investigation and patient notification is specific to clients who received dental treatment. The Cosmetic Center is routinely inspected by Peel Public Health and received a pass at the last inspection on January 15, 2019.

**Why is Peel Public Health recommending I see a health care provider to discuss testing for hepatitis B, hepatitis C and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)?**

Peel Public Health observed infection control lapses at Alforat Dental Center, including improper cleaning, sterilization and storage of dental instruments. These practices carry a low risk of transmitting infectious diseases, such as hepatitis B, hepatitis C and, to a lesser extent, HIV. Although the risk of bloodborne infections is low, as a precaution, Peel Public Health recommends that all clients that have received dental services at Alforat Dental Center between February 2014 and September 19, 2019 contact their health care provider (doctor, nurse practitioner or walk-in clinic) to discuss testing for hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV.

**What are bloodborne infections?**

Bloodborne infections (BBIs) are caused by viruses that are carried in the blood and can cause illness in people, such as hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV. They can be transmitted through the exchange of sexual fluids and through contact with blood and other bodily fluids. In dental offices, bloodborne viruses may be transmitted through unclean or inadequately sterilized instruments that come in direct contact with open wounds or mucous membranes in the mouth, nose or eyes.

**I was a patient at Alforat Dental Center. Will I receive a letter?**

As the clinic was not able to provide Public Health with a complete list with patient contact information, you will not receive a letter by mail. Patient letters will be handed out at the practice to patients who received dental care between February 2014 to September 19, 2019. We are providing information through media, on location at the clinic and through our social channels. All information for patients is located on this website and patients can use the [lab requisition \(PDF\)](#).

**What should patients of Alforat Dental Center tell their doctor?**

Patients who received dental care at Alforat Dental Center between February 2014 and September 19, 2019, should take the laboratory requisition and Questions and Answers to their doctor to decide about getting tested for hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and HIV. Use the [lab requisition \(PDF\)](#).

### **What should I do if I don't have a family doctor?**

Go to a walk-in clinic with the [lab requisition \(PDF\)](#).

### **What does the testing involve?**

Blood samples are collected and sent to a laboratory for analysis. The tests are free for Ontario residents and covered by the Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP). If you do not have OHIP or other medical coverage, please contact Peel Public Health at 905-799-7700 to discuss options.

### **Should my partner or other family members be tested?**

Only clients who received dental services at Alforat Dental Center are advised to discuss testing with their doctor. The risk of disease from this situation is low. Discussing testing with a doctor is being recommended as a precaution.

### **I am already vaccinated for hepatitis B, should I still see my doctor?**

Yes. Peel Public Health recommends that all clients see their doctor, even if they have been vaccinated against hepatitis B. This is because there is a risk of transmission of other bloodborne diseases, including hepatitis C and to a lesser extent HIV.

### **When will my test results be available and where can I get them?**

Test results will be sent back to your family doctor or other ordering physician (e.g., walk-in clinic doctor) within two weeks of being submitted. Your health care provider can provide information about how to follow up on your results and any further testing or treatment that you may require.

### **If a test result is positive, what are the next steps?**

Your health care provider will receive all test results and will contact you if results are positive for any illness. Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and HIV are all reportable diseases. All positive tests will also be reported to Peel Public Health and a Public Health Nurse will contact you for recommended follow-up.

### **I am positive for hepatitis B or hepatitis C or HIV. Does this mean I got the infection at Alforat Dental Center?**

There are many ways that these infections can be transmitted through contact with blood and other bodily fluids. If you were diagnosed after February 2014 and are concerned that you may have been infected from dental procedures at this clinic, speak

with your health care provider. There may be some additional tests that can be attempted to investigate the source of infection.

### **Where can I learn more about hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV?**

Visit [www.peelregion.ca/health/infectioncontrol/common-diseases.htm](http://www.peelregion.ca/health/infectioncontrol/common-diseases.htm) for more information.

- [CATIE Hepatitis B Fact Sheet](#)
- [CATIE Hepatitis C Information](#)
- [Peel Public Health HIV Information](#)

### **How do I report concerns regarding infection control practices at community clinics (e.g., dental offices, walk-in clinics, family practice offices, laboratories) in Peel Region?**

Contact Peel Public Health by phone at 905-799-7700 or email your concerns with your contact information to [zzginfectioncontrol@peelregion.ca](mailto:zzginfectioncontrol@peelregion.ca)