

Frequently Asked Dental Questions



Revised February 21, 2008

1. Q: What type of Dental care is provided in the Operation Serve clinics?

A: Cleanings, fillings, and extractions. In Mexico and Egypt some of the national Dentists in country still use Amalgams but our ministry only uses light curing resins for fillings.

In Mexico: We have two light curing instruments – one brand new rechargeable battery operated and an older one.

In Egypt: We have one light curing instrument.

2. Q: Are the clinics equipped with the necessary tools I will need as a Dental practitioner? Is there a need for scalars, forceps, and elevators?

A: **In Mexico:** we have 3 portable dental units, 3 patient chairs, one cavitron, portable x-ray machine and an autoclave. **In Egypt:** We have 1 stationary dental unit, and x-ray machine.

In Mexico and Egypt: we have forceps, scalars, and elevators that are average, to above average quality for normal and standard use. Some practitioners prefer to use specialized forceps and elevators so if you prefer to work with your own tools we encourage you to bring them to use. **Please note:** We are a 501c3 which is a federally tax exempt non-profit that can provide a letter of receipt for any Dental companies or corporations that would like to donate any tools or instruments to be used ongoing in the field. **We always need donations of disposable scalpels.**

3. Q: Will I be able to properly sterilize the tools I will be using?

A: Yes you will. **In Mexico:** the mobile clinic is equipped with a Tuttnauer autoclave for sterilizing.

In Egypt: we have a autoclave for sterilizing the items you will need to use.

In Mexico & Egypt: Many times we also utilize chemical sterilization such as Cidex or Gafidex.

4. Q: Do I need to bring Dental Anesthetics for treating my patients?

A: We usually purchase the topical and injectable anesthetics in Mexico and Egypt. We will have anesthetics available with and without epinephrine. One package of 50 cartridges with epi is about \$10 (US) and without is \$13 (US) Topical Anesthetic is usually \$4-\$5 a bottle.

5. Q: Do you have a high speed and low speed handpieces? Do I need to bring burs for the hand pieces?

A: **In Mexico:** we have 3 high-speed handpieces and one low speed

In Egypt: we have 2 high-speed handpieces and one low in Egypt.

In Mexico & Egypt: It would be great if you bring some burs.

6. Do you need Composites, temporary filling materials, cements and liners?

A: As you can imagine this is our greatest need for the field in treating the vast number of people we see annually. Any donations or recruitment of supplies for these items would be a great blessing.

7. Q: What types of dental conditions will I most likely be treating?

A: Caries, some infections, gingivitis, and periodontal disease. We are often the first dental professional to view many of our patients and it is a critical role to teach each patient about oral health and help them get channeled to receive any care that they need. So we encourage you to educate your patients especially the children and those individuals that are diabetics etc. Many of the people you will be in contact will be so grateful for the evaluation and review and education, desiring to know how to better care for their children and family. Also in Egypt, it is common for many government hospitals to discriminate against Christians & not provide necessary care. In Mexico, it is common for the hospitals and clinics to discriminate against the poor. This is a frustrating concept however, it is a reality. We are doing everything we can possibly do to provide some sort of care facility with Christian principles to all those who visit our clinics.

8. Q: Should I bring my own gloves?

A: They will be provided for you at the clinic. However, one box would assist us in maintaining our supply for ongoing clinic use.

9. Q: Are you in need of any syringes or needles?

A: We do have syringes & needles on hand at the clinics. However, because of the ongoing use and needs some of the needles are of a small gauge, such as 25 & 30 short, that we keep in the dental area.

10. Q: Do you need items like tongue blades?

A: Tongue blades are always necessary to the operation of the dental and medical clinics. We are always in need of such items.

11. Q: Are there ever any X-rays done out of your facilities, or is it all sent to a local hospital?

A: **In Mexico:** we have a portable X-Ray machine MINXRAY P200DMarkIII 120V. If we find a problem we can't fix we have to refer the patients within the Christian network of Dentists or refer to local clinics for follow up.

In Egypt: we have a stationary X-ray Machine

12. Q: Should I bring any fluoride to help treat the patients?

A: This would be great! All the parents would especially welcome a fluoride treatment for their children.

13. Q: I am aware that you are in need of antibiotics & pain medications. Do you also need liquid forms of antibiotics or pain medications for younger patients?

A: Yes. Many of the families we see cannot afford to purchase fever reducers, antibiotics, or pain medications as needed for their children, we are in constant need of such items as liquid forms of antibiotics, Tylenol, & Ibuprofen. You will be able to order and dispense through our mobile medical clinic and pharmacy any antibiotics needed for dental infections you diagnose and analgesics as needed.

14. Q: What medicines should I bring, & how should they be packaged?

A: Any medication that you have access to would be great! Specifically needed are antibiotics, analgesics, and anti-inflammatory agents. If you would like to package it yourself that would help, but if you cannot, many of the team members are available to assist on the field with packaging in recommended dosages. We do recommend that you condense any samples that you obtain. Many sample bottles contain only a few pills and if you combine the medications make sure that they are the same medication and dosage and with the same expiration date. Condensing the bottles allows you to carry more meds. Please maintain a medication insert sheet with any newly marketed medications brought to the field.

15. Q: Will I need to take a copy of my Dental license with me?

A: It would be advisable to carry your license with you & mail a copy to the Operation Serve Office.

16. Q: What is the average number of patients a doctor will see throughout the day?

A: The number of patients you see is entirely up to you. We register 4 to 6 patients at a time, & then judge from there. The number of patients a dentist may see is based upon each dentist & the complication of the problems presented by the patients. Our staff is there for you & will help to maximize your time in the clinic. There is potential of seeing hundreds of people each day, but it is realistic to say that on average, dentists meet with between 7 & 12 patients a day. Often we triage the patients who arrive to see the dentist based on the greatest need and if we have the resources to treat them.

17. Q: If I bring my tools is it acceptable to pack them in my carry-on?

A: Please pack any scissors or sharp instruments in your checked bags. It is not a problem for checked bags but may create a major problem as a carry-on.

18. Q: I understand that test kits for diabetes are needed. Should I obtain accucheck machines along with the test strips?

A: We are always in need of these items. In the past, we have had many accucheck machines donated to our clinics, however, even more than the machines; our need is for the strips to accompany them. We do not have the ability to purchase the strips in Egypt or Mexico, so it presents a problem when we have the machines but no way to properly utilize them. So a great need on our team is the test strips. So bringing a machine with strips would be a great asset to the field. There are a lot of Diabetics in Mexico & Egypt.

We look forward to serving with you in field! If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to call our office.