COVID-19 TESTING AND COVID-19 INFECTION RATE IN SPANISH DENTISTS

3 SURVEYS CARRIED OUT BY THE SPANISH DENTAL COUNCIL
November 2020

COVID-19
Introduction

The Spanish Dental Council, in view of the situation created by COVID-19, has carried out 3 consecutive survey to obtain data on the prevalence of COVID-19 testing and COVID-19 infection rate in Spanish dentists.

Survey methodology

- **Type of survey**: online autofill survey
- **Type of study**: descriptive quantitative study
- **Universe of analysis**: all Spanish dentists (39,000)
- **Data collection**: the data from the 3 surveys were collected between April 8–13 (first survey), June 1–12 (second survey) and September 1–14 (third survey).

Sociodemographic data of samples

The distribution of the 3 samples is representative of all dentists in Spain.

- First survey: the sample consisted of 4,298 participating dentists, with an average age of 42.5 years, with 63% being women and an average professional experience of 18.5 years.
- Second survey: 1,738 dentists, with an average age of 44.5 years, with 67% being women and an average professional experience of 19.5 years.
- Third survey: 2,208 dentists, with an average age of 43.5 years, with 62% being women and an average professional experience of 20.5 years.

Principal results

**How has your clinical work changed?**

In the first survey, 26% of the surveyed dentists have completely stopped working until further notice, 28% are located and only treat emergencies (through telephone triage), 26% only dealing with telephone queries (without face-to-face activity), 16.5% attend their clinic regularly but only treat emergencies, 3.5% perform support functions (in the public sector) and 0.5% state that they continue with their usual clinical activity, treating scheduled patients.

In June 88.5% of the dentists had returned to their professional activity with full normality and 6.5% exclusively attended dental emergencies.

The latest survey in September shows that 91% perform all clinical activities and 7% avoid AGPs.

**What type of mask are you using?**

In March–April only 32% of the dentists used the FFP2 mask (68% used surgical mask). In June, 97% used FFP2 mask increasing to 99% in September.
Are you using eye protection?

In March–April 80% of the respondents used eye protection increasing to 92% in June and 96% in September.

Evolution of COVID–19 testing

In March–April only 68 dentists (1.6%) had undergone some type of COVID–19 diagnostic test (rapid antigenic test or PCR). In June 17.3% had a PCR and 30.2% a rapid diagnostic test. In September 33.5% of the dentists had a PCR.

Evolution of COVID–19 infection rate

In March–April 1.9% of the surveyed dentists were diagnosed with COVID–19. In June 3% of the sample was diagnosed with COVID–19 (24 dentists by PCR and another 29 by rapid test). Finally, the September results show a COVID infection rate of 1.3% (30 dentists, all of them diagnosed by PCR).


- % COVID-19 infection rate
- % COVID-19 RT-PCR testing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>% COVID-19 infection rate</th>
<th>% COVID-19 RT-PCR testing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 8–13</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1–12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 1–14</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>33.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n= number of dentists
Survey Conclusions

1. the prevalence of Spanish dentists with a COVID–19 diagnostic test has increased considerably in the analysed period (from 1.6% to 33%)
2. the COVID–19 infection rate in Spanish dentists should be considered low
3. the COVID–19 infection rate among dentists is lower than for the rest of the health personnel in Spain
4. the prevention measures and protocols against COVID–19 undertaken in dental clinics may justify these low COVID prevalence data

ANNEXES

Annex 1. Comparative table of sociodemographic characteristics of the Spanish dentists and the samples (sample 1 March–April, sample 2 June and sample 3 September)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Universe</th>
<th>Sample 1</th>
<th>Sample 2</th>
<th>Sample 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean age</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>44.5</td>
<td>43.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional experience (mean number of years)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of women</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Spain</th>
<th>Sample 1</th>
<th>Sample 2</th>
<th>Sample 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COVID–19 infection rate in Spain (end April)</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COVID–19 infection rate in Spain (15 June)</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td></td>
<td>3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COVID–19 infection rate in Spain (8 September)</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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