

# 5 Reasons Your Dental Practice Needs a Firewall

With cyber security threats on the rise, the risk to dental practices has reached unprecedented levels. In October, 2020, the FBI and other federal agencies even warned that cybercriminals are unleashing a wave of attacks against the U.S. healthcare system. A cyberattack means you could lose everything – patient and clinical records, sensitive data, financial information and your practice reputation – in an instant.

Luckily, there are ways to protect your practice and your patients. The first step is to install a firewall – the first line of defense to prevent unauthorized access to your network. In this white paper, we'll look at five reasons why firewalls are so important.



**Block Unauthorized Access:** Think of a firewall as a shield between your private network and the rest of the internet. A firewall is a piece of hardware that uses artificial intelligence to filter traffic and block unauthorized internet users from gaining access to the private data on your computers. Without a firewall, your network is open to threats.



**Prevent Data Breaches:** According to the HIPAA Journal, 37.47% more records were breached in 2019 than 2018 – with more healthcare records breached in 2019 alone than in the six years from 2009-2014! Preventing attacks is becoming increasingly challenging as cybercrime looks nothing like it did in the past. As the threats of cyberattacks increase and become more sophisticated, firewalls have also improved and implemented cutting-edge technology to counteract threats. At *HTI*, our recommended firewalls feature expanded capabilities such as AI threat protection and real-time breach detection.



**Early Detection:** When it comes to minimizing the damage of data breaches, early threat detection is key. Firewalls can be configured to send an alert if something in your network seems suspicious. This way, you can catch an attack early and immediately begin securing data and minimizing potentially catastrophic damage.



**HIPAA Compliance:** Firewalls are necessary in order to be Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) compliant. It's important to work with a dental-specific IT provider so they can help you understand various industry standards and ensure your practice stays compliant.



**Block Prohibited Websites:** Firewalls allow you to restrict access to unapproved and unsafe websites. If your employees are accessing the internet, it's important to set restrictions on external websites that could put your data and practice at risk.

No matter what size dental practice you have, it's essential to have a secure firewall as your first line of defense to keep intruders out. Having an IT company that not only understands your risk but has the expertise to implement a multi-level plan that protects your network is also important.

At *HTI*, we install and manage next-generation firewalls that prevent threats from inside and outside of your network. We are experts on HIPAA compliance and creating the safest network configuration within your dental practice.

## How confident are you in your overall cybersecurity protection?

Call 877-222-1508 for your complimentary risk assessment! Our expert technicians will thoroughly review your network to make sure there aren't any security gaps that could leave you vulnerable to threats.