

HOW TO EASE DENTAL ANXIETY for dentists

FEAR OF THE DENTIST CAN LEAD TO DENTAL PROBLEMS THAT, IN TURN, INCREASE ANXIETY. IT IS IMPORTANT TO HELP PATIENTS BREAK THIS CYCLE IN ORDER TO PROTECT THEIR MOUTH, MIND, AND OVERALL HEALTH.

Here are some tips dentists can use to help ease patients' anxiety.

EMPOWER PATIENTS TO FEEL SAFE AND HEARD



Greet patients with a warm smile.



Empower patients to feel safe and listened to.



Empathize with their needs and concerns.



Give information that will help patients to cope, for example how long procedures will last and the sensations they may experience during treatment.



Work together to make the visit as relaxed as possible.



Ask patients about their anxiety and any specific concerns they may have.

CREATE A CALMING ENVIRONMENT



Incorporate **soothing elements** such as plants, magazines, toys, puzzles, books, calming music, and TVs.



Keep the space well-organized and **clutter-free** to promote relaxation and comfort.



USE A STOP SIGNAL



Help patients feel in control during treatment by agreeing on a signal, such as **raising their hand**, to use if they feel overwhelmed or need a break.

USE CONTEXT-BASED DISTRACTIONS



Depending on the type of procedure, offer patients headphones for music or TV **to help ease anxiety.**

SEDATION



If fear is extreme and patients are unable to engage with treatment, **assess whether you feel sedation options**, such as nitrous oxide, or other methods, might be appropriate to enable them to receive treatment.



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