Dental Anxiety

Being anxious about visiting the dentist is really common, and can be a big barrier to taking care of your oral, and overall health. Here are some tips to help you overcome your worries, provide reassurance, and empower you to feel more in control and at ease before, during, and after your appointment.

Who’s afraid of the dentist?

50%
of people in Bristol
50%
of people in Cardiff
47%
of people in Edinburgh
47%
of people in Sheffield
40%
of people in Belfast
Liverpudlians are the most afraid of visiting the dentist
People of Plymouth are the least afraid of the dentist

You’re not alone
44% of the UK population fear the dentist
76% of the UK population
3% of people have never visited the dentist

Before your visit

Imagine yourself sitting calmly in the dentist’s chair and practice sighing deeply. Sighing releases calming alpha waves, similar to those experienced during mindfulness and meditation. Sighing can also act as a psychological reset for the brain. We naturally sigh when something is over, so this tricks our brain into thinking that the task or problem is over before it even starts.

Work out your fear

Think about the origin of your dental phobia to understand how it occurred. Dental fear often stems from childhood experiences, and this could help you to understand and dismantle the fear, as well as point to ways to overcome it.

Remember

Dentists and dental professionals choose their careers because they are passionate about helping people. Your dentist will be committed to providing you with the highest quality care. Their goal is to ensure that your visit is safe, painless, and as positive as possible.

Top 3 symptoms of dental anxiety

• ‘Uncomfortableness’
• Racing heartbeat or palpitations
• Sweating

Top 3 causes of dental anxiety

33.45% A bad experience in the past
25.45% Childhood experiences
24.66% Generalised anxiety

62% of people have a family member who is anxious about going to the dentist
36% of those people said that made them fearful of going to the dentist

Before your visit

Ask if you can visit your dental practice before the appointment to get used to the environment. The team will be able to offer ideas and suggestions to make things easier.

During your visit

Think about happy memories and your best achievements. Immerse yourself in those positive feelings while gently pinching either side of your thumb nail with the thumb and index finger of your opposite hand. Practice this technique in advance and combine it with controlled breathing.

As part of our continued partnership with mental health platform JAAQ (Just Ask A Question), we’ve created videos featuring our dental experts to answer a range of questions about dental anxiety and provide reassurance. Scan here to find out more.

*Research conducted by Censuswide among 2,000 adults in the UK. The data was collected between 15th May 2024 and 18th May 2024.