



Preparing Your Child for Dental Treatment

For most children, the less they know about the technical details of dental treatment, the better. We are here to get the job done, but also to make it a positive experience!

We avoid words like "shot," "hurt," "pain," and even "cavity," which can be scary. Instead, we refer to it as "brushing out tooth germs that make teeth sick" or "removing a brown spot". If technical details are necessary, we discuss them outside the child's presence. Dental treatment is a surgical procedure and requires full attention on your child during the visit. We welcome you to join your child during the treatment, but please support our terminology and remain a mostly silent partner. Our dental support staff may also help comfort your child by holding or tapping their hand during the procedure. For older children, we will sometimes choose to explain the process after the treatment is completed to help build their confidence for future dental visits.

Some common words you may hear during the procedure: "silly air", "water squirter", "sparkle brush", "squishy fish pillow", "ice cream air/jelly/drops"

Delaying treatment can cause pain or infection, potentially leading to more extensive procedures like baby root canals, crowns, extractions, etc. If you have questions or concerns regarding the recommended treatment, please let us know so it can be discussed prior to your scheduled visit.

Types of Treatments:

- **Fillings on Baby Teeth:** We clean out the cavity and place a white (composite) filling which is expected to last until the baby tooth falls out (ages 6-13). Fillings can fracture and get new decay underneath them requiring future treatment to maintain the teeth. Please note that treatment can change during the procedure if the cavity is deeper than anticipated (exams/x-rays only tell us 70% of the story).
- **Fillings on Adult Teeth:** A composite filling is placed. Good oral hygiene and diet are essential to prevent new decay.
- **Pulpotomy/ Crown:** For large cavities reaching the nerve, we either extract the tooth or clean out the nerve, apply medicine, and place a crown that protects the tooth until it falls out. Cosmetic options are available but less durable with higher chances of failure.
- **Extraction:** Recommended for extensive decay, infection, or issues with permanent teeth. A space maintainer and/or early orthodontics may be needed for baby molar extractions depending on age.
- **Nitrous Oxide (Laughing Gas):** Helps children with mild to moderate anxiety and reduces gagging. It may not be effective for higher anxiety levels or sensitivity. Normal activities can be resumed after use.
- **Numbing agents:** Local anesthetics numb the tooth and surrounding structures. Anesthesia may last 30 min-2 hours. Monitor your child to avoid lip/cheek biting and avoid eating until the numbness wears off.

Medical Notes: Please avoid giving your child a large or heavy meal at least 1hr before the appointment but make sure that your child has had something to eat at least 2 hours prior to avoid low-sugar levels. If your child has Asthma, we recommend a dose of inhaler 30 minutes prior to their appointment and having it on hand. Please do not conceal any medical information from us, as medical history can impact the agents we use for a safe and effective procedure.

"Your mouth is the entryway to your body, and maintaining its health is essential for overall well-being."