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Magazine

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Q&A

I'm a nervous patient and parent at the dentist. I do not want my children to be like me. Is there really a way to help?

Yes, there are many excellent ways to start your children off the right way at the dentist.

Firstly, try to ensure they visit the dentist when they are still very young so they have good habits early on and not just go when there is a toothache. The right age is debatable but sitting on your lap and having a ride in the chair can start around six months old. Avoid any negative talk to your children before the visit, they will pick up on your anxiety.

Try finding a dental practice, which is highly recommended by a friend or co-worker. This cuts out the element of guesswork. Next, check the practice website to see if you get a good impression and if indeed they welcome children. Not all practices are family-orientated.

Call the practice to confirm your impression. Do you get a prompt answering of the phone? Do they have time for you or they appear hurried and stressed?

When you find a practice that feels right, you may want to visit them on your own to confirm your favourable impression. You could enquire about

your concerns and then hopefully schedule an appointment. Your children would feel better if you are booked in to visit the dentist too!

I would also like my children to have perfectly healthy and natural looking teeth - how can I ensure this?

This is really a repeat of previous advice and is worth the most to repeat. Early first visit to the dentist and regular visits, not just when there is a problem. We call this approach Preventive Maintenance. Use of dental sealants, brush and floss twice a day, low frequency sugar in diet and orthodontic checks to avoid crowding problems later.

The New Composite Revolution sweeping the world means that all children can benefit from tooth coloured fillings; unlike the older generations who had the old unsightly mercury black fillings.

In future articles, further information will focus on the Hi Tech aspects of dental care and how you can benefit.



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