

## Dental Care Guidance for Caregivers of Patients with ADHD

### The Most Common Dental Issue Seen in Patients With ADHD

The most common dental issue that many dentists see in patients with ADHD are **cavities**.

- It can sometimes be difficult for children with ADHD to perform routine activities like brushing their teeth or flossing. These poor oral hygiene practices put individuals with ADHD at risk for cavities.
- Medications used to manage ADHD can lead to changes in one's diet and appetite which can increase a child's risk for cavities.
- Side effects of an ADHD medication such as dry mouth also make individuals prone to cavities

### Dental Care Tips For Patients With ADHD

Here are some tips for dental care for parents with children with ADHD:

- Create an atmosphere of confidence with a gentle but firm approach
- Repeat simplified instructions numerous times
- Use a tooth brushing chart at home to keep track of the tooth brushing schedule
- Place emphasis on the brushing of teeth rather than the brushing technique.
- You may use positive reinforcement/rewards for better results
- The use of the tell-show-do method has been shown to be very effective

### ADHD & Dental Care Tips for Dentists

UNCAPPED is an acronym used for dentists and caretakers to help children with ADHD during their dental appointments and can be useful to parents and caregivers outside of the dental office as well.

**U**nderstanding for your patient

**N**on-judgemental attitude

**C**alm. Stay calm and relaxed

**A**ttitude. Keep a positive attitude

**P**raise. Be generous with positive praise.

**P**atient. Be patient with your client's needs

**E**mpathy

**D**irectness

### Finding the right dentist

Here are a few questions you can ask when deciding on a dentist that will help you decide who is best for your loved one.

1. *Are you comfortable working with someone who has ADHD?*

The dentist you choose should be comfortable working with a patient with special needs. Dentists who specialize in special needs care have 2-3 years of extra schooling and will be able to accommodate better for their visit.

2. *Can any special accommodations be made?*

It is a dentist's goal to make a patient as comfortable as possible. Some accommodations that you may want to request are if you can stay near them throughout their visit, or if they can have a specific flavor of toothpaste. These may seem small but can make a difference in their overall dental experience.

## Dental Sedation

Sedation can be used when a patient feels extreme anxiety towards the dentist. It can also be used if someone's health is at risk and they do not want to cooperate. Here are 4 common types of sedation:

- ***Inhaled minimal sedation:*** Breathing in nitrous oxide combined with oxygen to help relax. Your dentist is in complete control of sedation that is given.
- ***Oral sedation:*** Can range from minimal to moderate. This type of sedation is most commonly associated with sedation dentistry. The pill makes will make the patient drowsy while a more moderate dose may make the patient fall asleep.
- ***IV moderate sedation:*** A sedation drug is given through a vein and works more quickly. Your dentist will be able to continually adjust the sedation levels.
- ***Deep sedation & general anesthesia:*** Medication is given that will make the patient nearly or totally unconscious. While under general anesthesia you cannot easily be awakened until the effects of the medication wear off or are reversed

## Medicaid information:

To find a dentist who accepts Medicaid, and for more information contact your state's dental association. If you need help finding your state's dental association you can search for yours on the American Dental Association website.

For more information on caring for a someone with ADHD visit:  
<https://www.emergencydentistsusa.com/adhd-and-dental-care>