

Exclusively for Dental Health Services Enrollees

TOOTH TIPS!

Understanding Dental Anxiety: A Hidden Barrier to Oral Health

More than 70% of dental patients report some level of fear or anxiety before appointments. While mild unease is common, for many, that fear can be strong enough to delay or avoid necessary care, leading to worsening oral and overall health.

What Drives Dental Anxiety?

Some Common triggers include:

- *Past negative experiences* – Painful or rushed procedures can leave lasting impressions.
- *Fear of pain or needles* – Even minor discomfort can cause stress or panic for some patients.
- *Loss of control* – Being unable to speak or stop the procedure makes some feel vulnerable.
- *Sounds, smells, or sensations* – Drills, bright lights, and antiseptic smells can heighten anxiety.
- *Generalized anxiety or trauma* – Broader emotional or psychological factors can amplify fear in the dental chair.

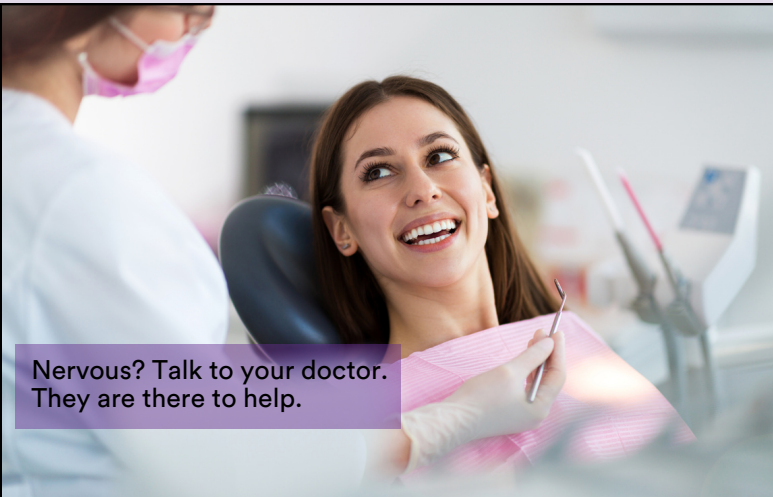
What Can You Do to Make Visits Easier?

- Talk openly with your dentist about your fears - they've heard it all before!
- Ask for a "stop" signal or breaks when you need them
- Bring calming music or practice deep breathing before your appointment
- Schedule shorter or morning visits to minimize stress buildup
- Consider behavioral or relaxation techniques between visits

"If you're nervous about seeing the dentist, you're not alone, and it doesn't have to stop you. Talk to your provider. A good dentist will always make time to make you comfortable."
— Dr. Elena Brooks, DDS

Key Takeaway:

Your comfort matters just as much as your oral health. Taking small steps to reduce fear helps you stay on top of preventive care, and keeps your smile healthy for life.



Nervous? Talk to your doctor.
They are there to help.