MY FEARS

This is a list of common dental fears. It can help you figure out what prevents you from seeing a dentist, or what makes dental visits difficult for you. Tick the fears that are relevant to you.

- I’m scared of what a dentist will say about my teeth and my oral hygiene
- “The chair” terrifies me
- I’m scared that treatment will be painful
- I’m scared that injections will be painful
- I have a phobia of dental injections
- I have a phobia of needles more generally
- Feeling out of control and not being in charge of what is happening
- Having little or no say in what is being done to me
- Lying down rather than sitting up in the dental chair
- I gag easily - I’m scared of embarrassing myself, throwing up, or _______________
- The noise of dental instruments
- Choking, suffocating or not being able to swallow - more details__________________
- The noise of the drill
- The smell - more details: ____________________________
- Fainting at the sight or thought of an injection
- I fear the dentist’s behaviour more than dental procedures as such
- I fear dental procedures rather than the dentist
- I’m scared of being told what’s going on during treatment – I’d rather not know!
- I’m scared of not being told what’s going on - I’d rather know!
- I’m scared of the dentist not stopping when I’m distressed or in pain.
- I’m scared of being in a lot of pain afterwards
- Dentists have had trouble getting me numb in the past and I’m worried it will happen again
- I wasn’t given anaesthetic for a painful dental procedure in the past and I’m worried it will happen again
- I’m worried that the dentist will carry out unnecessary treatment
- I’ve got a problem with or fear of a particular treatment or treatments (for example, cleanings, having a filling, or having a tooth removed):

_________________________________________________________

- I’m scared that the dentist will treat me as a set of teeth, not as a person, and will be cold and uncaring
- I’m scared that the dentist will not be gentle with me
I’m worried that I will panic so much that I have a heart attack
I’m worried that I will have a panic attack and lose my mind
I’m worried that I will have a panic attack and what the dentist or other people will think about me then
I’m worried that I will start crying or shaking uncontrollably and what the dentist will think of me then
I’m worried that the local anaesthetic (numbing injection) will cause an allergic reaction.
I’ve had a bad reaction to a local anaesthetic injection in the past and I’m worried it will happen again - more details: ______________________________________________
I’m scared that dental instruments will be laid out in plain sight
I’m scared of the pokey thing they use to check teeth
I’m scared that the dentist will be shocked and disgusted at the sight of my teeth, and how embarrassed and humiliated I will feel then
I’m very worried about getting infections from dental instruments
I’m scared that the dentist will inflict pain on purpose
I’m scared that the dentist will inflict pain by accident
I fear the drill, especially the sound / especially pain
I fear seeing what the dentist does during treatment
I’m worried that I’ll have a bad reaction to the local anaesthetic - more details:
I’m scared that I’ll be unable to breathe or that I will suffocate - more details:
I’m scared of having items or hands in my mouth
I’m scared of seeing instruments near my mouth
I’ve left it too late
The dentist calling out numbers while looking at my teeth (dental charting)
Looking at my own teeth
Letting someone else look at my teeth
Letting a dentist look at my teeth
The dental assistant thinking I’m disgusting for having my teeth get into such a state
Not being able to afford the suggested treatment
Being lectured or told off for not having looked after my teeth properly
Being lectured or told off for not having visited a dentist earlier
X-ray radiation
Not being treated warmly and compassionately
Cotton wool rolls
I have other health problems which make it difficult for me to seek help for my dental problems - more details: __________________________________________________

- Being left in the waiting room for a long time
- Being frozen with fear and unable to communicate my concerns to a dentist
- Being frozen with fear and unable to give a stop signal
- Not being able to cope with the “bad news”
- I’m scared of medical settings generally
- People touching me without my consent
- Trusting someone with my body
- I have a fear of throwing up (emetophobia) and I’m worried that medications or gagging may cause vomiting
- I’m scared of the numb feeling because it makes me feel…
  - not in control of my body
  - as if I might suffocate
  - other: ____________________________

Other fears I have:

You can find more information about these fears, and get tips for dealing with them, at www.dentalfearcentral.org/fears/ or ask on our forum at www.dentalfearcentral.org/forum/ for ideas.