

Personalized Dentistry

All dental practices face challenges, and running one is the biggest challenge of all. Of course, our primary concern is our patients' oral health, but we also need to be thinking about managing our team, staying up-to-date on changes in the dental profession, and dealing with the latest changes and recommendations concerning the COVID pandemic. It is a lot for anybody to do, and it shines a light on the chal-

lenges facing every dental practice as we begin 2021.

For dental practices in the United States to succeed, we must provide top-notch care to our patients. That means not letting the issues we face get in the way of optimizing the patient experience to ensure that our patients stay happy and return.

Personalization is one way to make our patients feel

special. Overcrowding and population issues in certain areas make people believe that dentists must see many patients in a day. This is NOT the reality. With the knowledge that consumers are particular about which health care providers they choose, some dental practices are becoming hyper-focused on creating a special experience for their patients to differentiate themselves from their competitors. We have embraced this approach over the last several years and have found that our new, and current patients, are all thriving from this specialized attention. It might seem odd to think of a visit to the dentist as being personalized and enjoyable, but there is a growing trend toward things such as concierge service and extra amenities to make patients feel comfortable. Advanced technology for TMJ and sleep apnea, 3D Cone Beam X rays, Surgically Clean Air and even headphones and massage chairs are routinely used in our office. These tools and techniques that we have implemented over the years, and significantly improved, have added to the overall positive experience for our patients during these trying times.

One of the dental trends that have been most useful during the COVID-19 pandemic is telehealth. Telehealth can be useful for evaluating new and existing patients to help minimize the time that they spend in your office. Dentists and other health-care providers have turned to this technology to help them interact with patients. Compared to other trends in dental industry technology, there is a limit to what you can do with teledentistry. For obvious reasons, you cannot provide direct care remotely. You can, however, ascertain whether an in-person visit, and treatment might be necessary. This has been invaluable for our TMJ and Sleep Apnea Patients. It has allowed us the opportunity in some cases to provide virtual consultations to patients and determine, prior to an actual visit, if our office can help them. There has been a significant increase in patients suffering from symptoms like headaches, migraines, jaw pain, ear pain, and neck issues due to increased



Dentally Speaking

by Jeffrey S. Haddad D.D.S.

stress and clenching/grinding during this pandemic. Sleep issues like sleep apnea and insomnia have also been on the rise. Therefore, our virtual consultations have been invaluable in our office allowing us to see and treat patients who are suffering from these issues.

The key is for patients to be diligent in their research and choices in the right dental practice for themselves. Personalized dentistry helps to improve the patient experience. Dentists who specialize in comprehensive, full mouth and cosmetic dentistry are best prepared to provide this personalized dentistry. When used properly, it can help calm patients' nerves and make the entire dental experience less intimidating and enjoyable as possible. During these times, going to the dentist should not be another stress or concern that people should have to deal with. Therefore, dental offices who are taking these extra steps to personalize your visit and assure that your health is their highest priority should be highly considered.

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