

# “No offense, Doc, but I HATE coming to the dentist...”

This is something every dentist hears almost every day of their professional career. I heard it again just the other day.

Unfortunately, most of

these people have very deep-seated fear...and for good reasons. This particular patient told us, with fear in her eyes, that she had been traumatized in the past by not just one,

but by several dentists. When she complained that she was feeling pain, this doctor just ignored her and kept on working. This situation creates the fear of being out of control, fear of not knowing what is next, and causes a feeling of claustrophobia.

It is a sad fact that other caring dental professionals hear similar stories all too often. I have been specializing in high fear patients for a long time, and I can assure everyone that the fear is real. Obviously, patients who have had bad experiences, real or perceived, have one thing in common; they stay away from the dentists until they are forced to make an appointment due to pain.

Modern technology allows dentists to sedate high fear patients and do most of their needed work in only one or two appointments. And when this work is completed, there is NO recollection of the

appointment, and they have made it through their biggest fears. That is how sedation dentistry works. If you are a high fear patient, please know there is help available if the dentist is properly trained.

If you or a loved one are fearful or experience anxiety when thinking about a visit to the dentist you are not alone. It is not uncommon to feel this way and studies report that up to 75% of the American population suffer from varying degrees of dental fear. If you have a loved one who has dental phobia, please know that it is real and it is extremely important that you understand this fear and do what you can to help them find the dentist who is right for them. If you hate going to the dentist because you are terrified, this article was written specifically for you.

The good news is that you no longer have to put your health on hold due to fear. Many offices are certified in sedation dentistry and work hard to alleviate common fears by focusing on getting to know the patient in a face-to-face consultation before any procedures. Please know that my team and I understand and respect your fear. Picking up the phone to make a dental appointment can be close to impossible. Just the thought of it creates fear and anxiety. Your fear is real, and you cannot just wish it away no matter what anyone tells you.

Our office has been successfully doing sedation dentistry for many years and here is what we have found to work for those who hate any type of dental visit. **We start with a face to face meeting** just



Dentally Speaking

by Jeffrey S. Haddad D.D.S.

to talk and only talk. Our number one goal on the first visit is for you to get to know us and for us to get to know you. It is the first step in you knowing you are in control. We want to hear your story. We want you to trust that we will treat you with


respect and understanding. You, the person who is attached to the teeth, are much more important than the needed dental work. We never even look in the mouth until you are ready. Overcoming the years of dental fear and claustrophobia is a huge step.

### Oral Sedation

The goal of oral sedation is for the patient to be in a sedated state throughout the procedure, even if it is several hours long. Most high fear patients want to get as much done as possible in the fewest appointments possible. The bonus of sedation dentistry is the product used is not only a sleeping pill, it is a hypnotic which means the odds are very high the patient will remember little or none of the appointment. In addition, it is a positive dental experience giving the patient the confidence they need to experience. Since the first appointment is to just talk, is there any reason not to pick up the phone and call before pain forces you to?

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