

Frequently Asked Questions

Here are some questions we often get at the office. If you have a question, feel free to use the [Ask a Question](#) form and we'll be happy to call or email you our best answer.

How soon can I eat after my filling is done?

The composite material we use for fillings is hardened as soon as we light cure it at your appointment, so you can eat on it right away. Patients should use caution when eating while they are still numb.

How long will the numbness last?

Typically the anesthetic will wear off within two to three hours.

Will I have any discomfort after my treatment?

If we believe there is a possibility you will experience any pain in response to your treatment, we will make sure you have a prescription available to you for medication that can keep you comfortable.

Can you “put me to sleep” when I have my wisdom teeth removed?

A doctor can prescribe a medication for you to take before your appointment that will relax you. You will be conscious, but will remember little about the appointment afterwards.

How long will my dental treatment take?

We do our best to let the patient know how long they will be in the dental chair and what will take place while we are working with them. We also have videos available in the operatory for patients to watch that will give them a good understanding of what their treatment will involve.

How can I improve my smile?

There are many options available in dentistry today. The dentist will meet with you for a consultation and ask what you would like to change about your smile. Depending on what your needs are, he may discuss the advantages of composite fillings, porcelain veneers, crowns, orthodontics or whitening.

What is the difference between a routine dental cleaning and a periodontal maintenance appointment?

A regular dental cleaning (prophylaxis) includes the interproximal cleaning of the teeth and gums, both on the tooth surface at the gumline and above, and polishing of the teeth. This treatment is performed for a healthy, disease-free individual. Periodontal maintenance is performed for a patient who has periodontal pockets or bone-loss due to periodontal disease. This treatment is done more frequently, not as a “cure”, but for prevention of further loss of bone. This patient is someone whose health may or may not be stable, but who needs additional care to maintain dental health. Patients requiring this type of treatment are usually those with pre-existing conditions making them more susceptible to disease, such as, a genetic pre-disposition to periodontal disease, a suppressed immune system, diabetes or smoking.

My gums seem to be receding and I am having some cold sensitivity. Why? What can be done about it?

Receding gums can be caused by improper tooth brushing, gum disease or even clenching and grinding of the teeth. People sometimes “scrub” their teeth too hard or use a medium or hard-bristled brush. This can wear away the gum tissue and the protective enamel exposing the dentin, which is made up of tiny tubules leading to the nerve of the tooth. When exposed, sweets, cold or metal instruments will cause sensitivity. You can use desensitizing toothpaste, have a dentist place tooth-colored resin over the worn area or have a soft tissue graft procedure to correct this condition. Gum disease can be treated with more frequent maintenance visits. Clenching and grinding of the teeth can be remedied with a splint.

How do unhealthy teeth and gums affect my heart?

Bacteria in the mouth can accumulate between the teeth and gums and cause the tissues to break down and bleed, directing the bacteria to enter the bloodstream. Long-term infection of the gums can cause this bacteria to coagulate in the heart valves or arteries, causing heart-related health concerns.

Why do my gums bleed?

Gum tissues will bleed when infection, caused by bacteria, is present. The condition can be remedied by removal of the bacteria and calculus by your dental hygienist and good daily oral homecare.

Am I at risk for gum disease?

Risk factors for gum disease include smoking, female hormonal changes, diabetes, stress, medications, illnesses, genetics, sex and age. The disease can range from gum inflammation (gingivitis) to serious gum disease (periodontitis). Preventive measures can be taken including brushing twice daily with a fluoride toothpaste, flossing daily preferably at night so food doesn't remain between teeth while you sleep, routine visits with your dental hygienist and dentist, eating a well-balanced diet and not using tobacco products.

What are dental sealants and why do I need them?

A sealant is a safe plastic material that is bonded in the pits and fissures on the chewing surfaces of teeth. Sealants are placed to prevent formation of cavities caused by bacteria living in the plaque that is left deep in fissures of teeth where toothbrush bristles cannot reach to remove it. Once the sealant is placed, filling these deep grooves, making the surface of the tooth smoother and flatter, you can clean it better. The American Dental Association recognizes that sealants play an important role in the prevention of tooth decay.

Is soda pop really bad for my teeth?

Soda pop is not only bad for your *teeth*, it's bad for your whole body! It has no nutritional value and can increase risk of diabetes, obesity and cavities. It *does* contain high-fructose corn syrup, additive dye, acid and caffeine. The acids in regular and diet soda dissolve the calcium out of the enamel of teeth leaving them open for bacteria to enter and cause cavities. Soda in moderation is okay, as long as you rinse with water after drinking it and practice good oral hygiene.

Why do I have bad breath?

Halitosis (bad breath) can be caused by bacteria that are not removed by brushing, flossing or mouthwash alone. Bacteria can hide under a coating on the tongue and release a by-product that causes the odor. Antibacterial mouthwashes cannot get past this coating to eliminate the bacteria, so, to do this you should use a tongue scraper. For best results, do this once or twice a day before brushing and flossing.

At what age should my child have his first dental visit?

We usually see patients for the first time between their third and fourth birthdays, unless a parent notices a problem, such as, early signs of tooth decay prior. The American Dental Society recommends a child be examined by the dentist at age one, to make sure they are developing normally, and it's never too early to develop good dental hygiene habits. New little patients become acquainted with us and the surroundings of the dental office so that they are comfortable being here from their first visit. We want it to be a very positive experience, so we never force anything they aren't ready for. Sometimes they watch a first-visit video, sometimes they ride in the dental chair and sometimes patients are ready to cooperate for their first dental polishing. Doctor can then count their teeth and check for cavities.

How often should visit my dentist and hygienist?

We recommend having your teeth examined by your dentist and professionally cleaned by your hygienist once every six months. Annually we will take x-rays to check for tooth decay.

When and how often should I brush and floss?

You should brush twice daily with a soft or extra-soft toothbrush for two minutes each time. Flossing should be done at least once daily. As long as the bacteria are removed every 24 hours, it doesn't really matter when you do it.

Why won't my insurance company cover more than two preventive dental appointments per year if I need it?

Dental insurance was designed many years ago to **offset** the cost of your dental care, not to cover everything you *need*. Benefits provided have not kept up with inflation or the coverage of newer procedures.

Will my dental insurance pay for the treatment I need?

We can give you a general idea of what is typically covered by most dental plans, but recommend a pre-determination of benefits be filed with your insurance company to provide you with the best estimate of coverage. We are happy to file this for you.

How much will my dental treatment cost?

We can provide you with a printed cost estimate at your exam appointment.

What are your hours?

Monday through Thursday, 8 am to 5 pm and Friday 8 am until noon.

Do you take payments?

Payment arrangements can be planned in-office for up to 90 days. With approved credit, we also offer plans that can extend payments for up to a year and are interest-free to the patient.

Do you take my insurance?

We are happy to file all insurance claims as a service to our patients, however, PPO participation is limited to Delta Dental and United Concordia.

[Ask a Question](#)