

General anaesthetic

Some people feel they cannot cope with treatment without general anaesthetic. If this is the case, you will require a referral to hospital.

As there are some serious risks associated with general anaesthetics, this procedure would be a last resort. Most hospitals will only remove teeth.

Useful information

Cheshire & Merseyside Emergency dental advice out of hours telephone: 0161 476 9651.

Greater Manchester Emergency dental advice out of hours telephone: 0333 332 3800

NHS emergency and urgent care services – 111

For impartial and confidential advice or information on the services provided by Bridgewater or to receive this leaflet in an alternative format call our Patient Services team on 0800 587 0562.

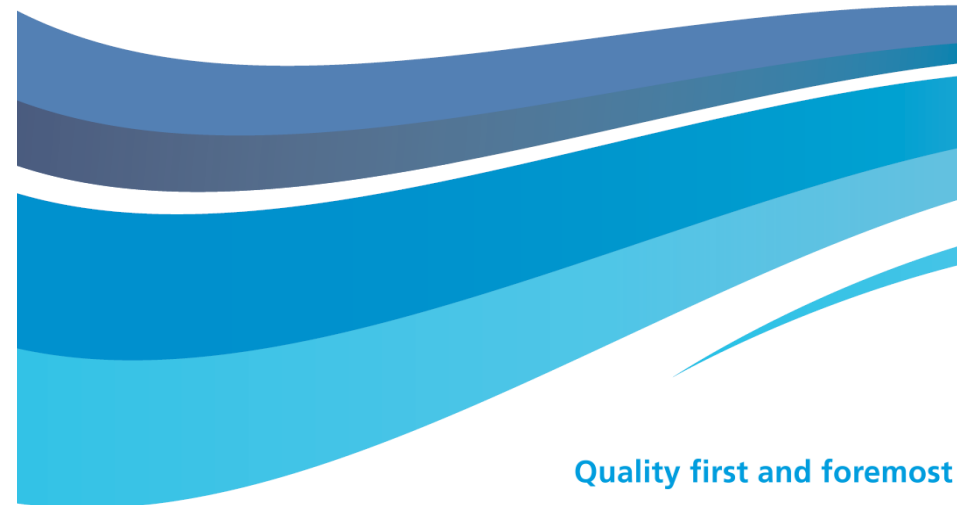
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Community Dental Service

Dental treatment for anxious patients



Dental anxiety

Fear of dental treatment is common. One in four people worry about having dental treatment.

People who are anxious about visiting the dentist are therefore more at risk of suffering from dental pain and poor oral health which can effect their quality of life.

Tips to help with dental anxiety

Here are some tips if you are anxious about seeing the dentist:

- Find an understanding dentist; ask friends and family if they can recommend someone
- Visit the surgery to have a look round and to meet the receptionist. Let the receptionist know if you are anxious so that they can let the dentist know before your appointment
- Pick an appointment time early in the morning so you have less time to think about it
- Take someone with you - the dentist will not mind if they stay with you during the check-up or treatment
- The first appointment will simply be a check-up so do not worry that you will be having any treatment - see this first visit as your chance to get to know the dentist
- Agree on a sign with your dentist to signal that you need a break and want them to stop. It can be as simple as lifting your finger and will help you feel more in control

- Take a personal stereo with you to listen to music during your visit. It may help you relax
- If you think it will help, start gradually with a clean and polish then work up to more extensive treatment once you feel comfortable with your dentist.

Extra support

If you have a much higher level of anxiety your dentist may feel you would benefit from additional support. There are a number of anxiety management techniques available.

Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)

This is a talking therapy intended to help people manage problems by changing thoughts and behaviours. CBT has been shown to be successful in reducing dental anxiety and increasing dental attendance. CBT is a short-term therapy that typically lasts between six and 10 sessions and can be accessed via your doctor.

Inhalation sedation

Some people find inhalation sedation very helpful to relax them for dental treatment. It is a bit like gas and air given during childbirth, but instead of being delivered through a mask it comes through a nosepiece.

Intravenous sedation

If you are extremely nervous you may prefer intravenous sedation (through an injection into your hand or arm) during treatment. The drug will not send you to sleep – you will be awake and able to talk to the dentist – but it will calm and relax you during treatment and you may not remember much of what happened afterwards.