


*what a beautiful*

**smile**



**Putting in End to  
Dental Phobia**



A close-up portrait of a woman with dark hair pulled back, smiling warmly at the camera. She is wearing a white lab coat over a light blue button-down shirt. A blue stethoscope is draped around her neck. In her left hand, she holds a white clipboard with a blue pen. The background is a soft-focus clinical setting.

“Thank you for your trust in the professional services we provide. That’s very important to me and my staff. Please enjoy this month’s issue of our Healthy Living magazine.”

**Dr. Patti Houltan, DC**



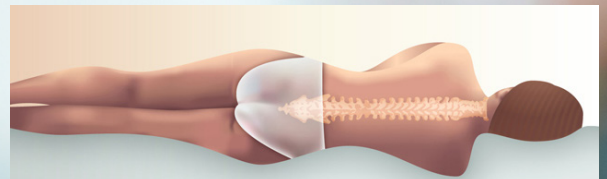
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# Putting in End to Dental

# PHOBIA

By Dion Kramer

## What is dental phobia?



A fear or anxiety associated with visiting a dentist is often referred to as dental phobia. Dental phobia is often the reason people avoid regular check-ups with a dentist. This naturally has consequences to your oral health and general well-being.

Neglecting your oral health can have unfavorable effects such as chronically infected gums which can compromise your ability to chew and digest. You may also develop consistent bad breath and an unattractive smile. All these things are likely to create social and psychological barriers in your relationships. Poor oral health can have resounding effects on your general health. So your dental phobia must be addressed.

## Are you affected by dental phobia?

The questions below will give you some idea as to whether you suffer from dental phobia:

- Do you recall a previous visit to the dentist that was unpleasant?
- Are you concerned that you will be embarrassed by remarks the dentist may make about the state of your oral health?
- Do you feel anxious while in the waiting area of the dental practice?
- Do you have feelings of uneasiness or tension while in the dental chair?
- Does the sight of dental instruments invoke unpleasant feelings?
- Do you feel ill or anxiety at the thought of an injection?
- Do objects placed in your mouth during the dental visit make you panic and feel like you can't breathe correctly?
- Do you feel that your dentist is unsympathetic only with you?





## What are the causes of dental phobia

Dental phobia can come about for many different reasons. Below is a list of those reasons described most often by people:

- A previously unpleasant visit to a dental practice. This could be for many reasons including careless remarks made to you by a dentist or hygienist.
- You have heard concerning stories from friends and family regarding visits to the dentist.
- You have seen or read sensationalized depictions in the media of dentists.
- You feel a lack of control in the dental chair that makes the situation uncomfortable.
- You feel self conscious about the poor state of your teeth and are embarrassed to highlight the fact with dental staff.
- You have a negative feeling at the thought of visiting a dentist due to their use of dental gowns, masks and latex gloves.

## How to put an end to your Dental Phobia?

### 1. Dental fear can be overcome

Understanding dental phobia is a good beginning. You are not destined to suffer from dental phobia for your entire life. The fear you associate with visiting the dentist can be unlearned. Keep in mind when visiting the dentist that you are not simply a set of teeth but a person. A concerted effort to make use of techniques discussed below can put your fear to rest.



### 2. A suitable dentist

It is essential to have a dentist and staff that are suitable. Your visit to the dentist can be pleasant with a dentist who is sympathetic towards your dental phobia. Dentists genuinely concerned about your welfare will listen carefully to your needs and proceed accordingly. You should not hesitate to seek out an alternative dentist if this is not the case.



### 3. Be honest with your dentist

There are many treatment options that people do not know about. Several of these could assist you greatly. Try to put aside any embarrassment you feel for the current state of your oral health. Your dentist will be able to help you if you communicate openly and honestly about your concerns.

### 4. Good communication

Effective communication between you and your dentist can go a long way to making you feel comfortable. You could eliminate the fear of the unknown by communicating to your dentist such information as lengths of appointments that you can tolerate. Establishing a signaling system to indicate the need for a break or some other message can also give you confidence.



## 5. Knowledge

Obtaining knowledge about prospective dental procedures can put to rest any anxiety. Information regarding dental procedures is readily available in brochures in the practice, books and the internet. Any remaining questions can be answered by your dentist. Your dentist is well aware of the seriousness of dental phobia. So do not hesitate to take part in decisions relating to your treatment plan.

## 6. Relaxation techniques

Learning to relax when visiting the dentist is essential. Various physical relaxation techniques can put your mind at ease. It may do you some good to look into books on diaphragmatic breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, or yoga.

## 7. Distraction techniques

Distraction techniques can assist you to make dental visits more tolerable. One common method is to listen to music while your dentist works. Keep in mind not to hinder your communication when making use of distraction techniques.



*“ A discussion with your dentist could help you to identify a suitable option. ”*

## 8. Predictable pain control

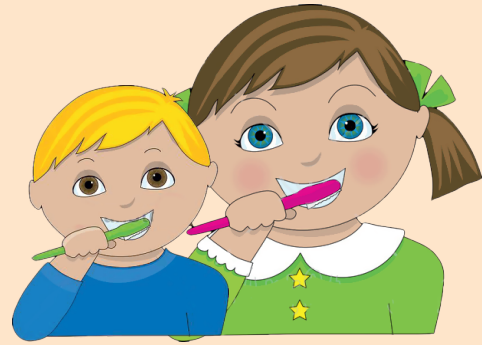
Local anesthetics can be utilized to prevent pain. Some people though require more customized techniques in order to attain proper local anesthesia. It is therefore important that your dentist be made aware of your situation.

Nitrous oxide, otherwise known as “laughing gas”, can relieve pain. Several oral medications can also assist you with dental phobia. Medication such as valium can make you feel considerably relaxed throughout any dental procedure.



# Dental

## Myths, Facts & Oddities!



### *Soft bristled tooth brushes:*

Best for brushing because they do not cause gingival recession

### *Replace brush after illness:*

Reused brushes can have microbial build-up leading to reinfection

### *Ignore handle shapes:*

Neck of brush has little effect on overall results

### *Don't brush too hard:*

Over-brushing erodes enamel, irritates the gums and causes increases sensitivity

### *Electric not necessarily better:*

Potentially easier to use, but there is no proven data to show that they clean better

### *Sugar-free gum does help!:*

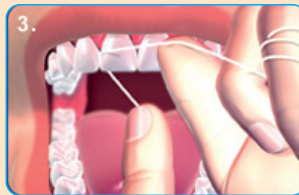
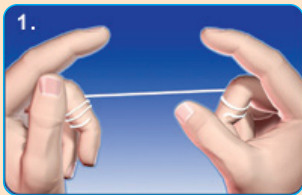
This gum washes away plaque acid, leading to healthier teeth



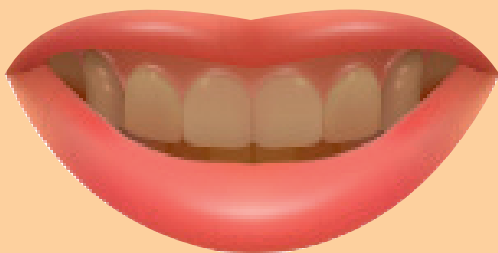
### Tips on using Dental floss

### *Flossing:*

- Gently guide floss between the teeth by using a ZIG-ZAG motion
- Contour floss around the side of the tooth
- Floss each tooth thoroughly with a clean section of floss



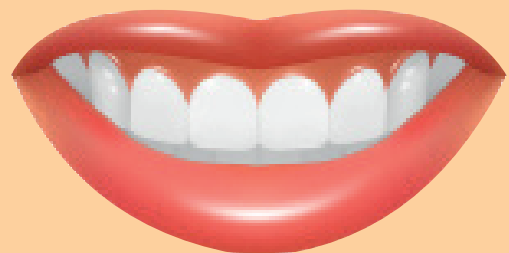
## *Brushing with baking soda for whitening*



It works and it's

Releases free radicals that join with stain molecules to break them down.

Freshness breathe and removes plaque.





# How Good is Your Sense of Taste?



By Dion Kramer



Your sense of taste is unique, it is like no other. Every single person has a different sense of taste depending on their specific taste buds. Your taste buds reside on your tongue and the roof of your mouth. When you eat or drink, these cells send messages to your brain about how the food tastes. Overall, your taste buds recognize four basic kinds of tastes: sweet, salty, sour and bitter.

Out of all the five senses, your taste is the weakest sense. Your taste buds can change over time and can deteriorate, depending on whether you are a smoker, taking specific medications that affect your taste, or not getting enough vitamins.

If you're looking to see how good your sense of taste is, ask yourself the following questions:

## 1. Has your sense of smell deteriorated over time or gotten better?

Your sense of smell is strongly associated with your sense of taste, so if your sense of smell has changed, your sense of taste will most likely change too.

## 2. Are you a smoker?

Smoking can affect your taste buds and in turn, affect your ability to taste foods.



## 3. Do you take medication with any side-effects that affect your taste buds?

“ Overall, rate your ability to enjoy your food and that can give you a good indication of your sense of taste. ”

**4. Do you have a dry mouth?**

A lack of saliva in your mouth can affect the ability of your taste buds to communicate with your brain.

**5. Do you have an illness or a cold?**

Having an illness can have a temporary effect on your taste buds.



## Tips to improve your sense of taste

If you feel that your ability to enjoy your food has diminished, here are some tips to improve your sense of taste:

- Exercise—your sense of taste is heightened after exercising
- Drink water regularly to avoid having a dry mouth
- Don't smoke
- Eat only when you're hungry—you enjoy your food more when you are hungry
- Eat in a restaurant with other people—studies have shown that eating with other people makes food taste better than eating alone
- Add spice to your food
- Eat a different food with every spoonful
- Eat slowly and enjoy your food

See your dentist for a complete dental checkup to make sure there are no underlying issues with your teeth.





# Quick Home Remedies for a **Toothache**



**T**oothaches vary in their intensity and frequency. At their worst, they can make it hard for us to concentrate upon anything other than the throbbing pain.

A toothache can be caused by a variety of oral disturbances. The most frequent culprits are dental cavities, which occur when bacterial-formed acids eat through tooth enamel and leave the softer tissue inside – and its nerve endings – exposed. Pain can also be caused by dental caries (soft decayed areas within a tooth), pulpitis (inflammation of tooth pulp) and periodontitis (a disease that attacks the gum and bone around a tooth). The underlying cause of an ache will determine which home remedies will be most effective in combating the pain.

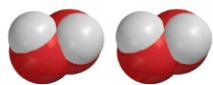


**Peppermint Oil** is one of the most popular and effective natural treatments for tooth pain. 3 or 4 drops applied directly to the affected tooth will exert a potent numbing effect upon the area. A similar effect can be achieved by applying oregano oil to the tooth (not the surrounding gums) for five to ten minutes. Oregano oil can be rubbed on with a cotton swab, though some people prefer to apply it directly with a dropper. It not only alleviates the pain but can also prevent its recurrence.



**Clove Oil** contains eugenol, which acts as an anesthetic as well as an antiseptic on affected teeth. Like other treatment oils, you can rub it onto an aching tooth with a cotton swab. A similar effect can be achieved using a mixture of clove powder (which also contains eugenol) and vanilla extract (which intensifies its anesthetic properties). Chewing on yarrow leaves can reduce the pain as well as the swelling often associated with an infected tooth.

**Cold Compresses** can provide temporary but quick surcease for an aching tooth, as the intense cold desensitizes the area for a brief time. Don't apply ice to the area directly, but rather wrap a cube in a towel or cloth first.



hydrogen peroxide

**Hydrogen Peroxide** which has been diluted with water, can nullify some of the pain of a toothache while at the same time helping to sanitize your mouth. Alcohol acts similarly as both anesthetic and antiseptic. A shot of liquor, allowed to sit upon an effected tooth for a couple of minutes, can exert a numbing effect. If you hadn't intended to actually imbibe the alcohol, simply spit it out after using it for this purpose.

Many of the available home remedies for toothache won't necessarily address the underlying problems that are causing the pain to begin with. A more thorough process of investigation – or dental work – may be necessary. But when we're hurting, we can more easily consider long-term solutions when we're able to find short-term relief.

**In the meantime, be careful not to aggravate an aching tooth further. If the act of chewing causes pain, try to stick to soups, yogurt, applesauce and other very soft foods. Avoid hot or cold drinks and sweet foods if you feel particularly sensitive to them.**

A combination of caution (i.e., avoiding anything that aggravates our teeth) and remedial care (using any of the applications discussed here) can go a long way towards alleviating tooth distress. It can give us peace of mind while we look for a long-term solution.



# How Stress Affects Your Oral Health



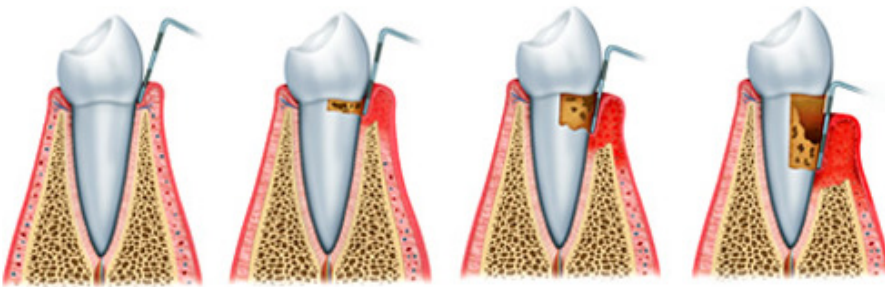
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## Stress may lead to the following oral health concerns:

- **Mouth sores, examples include canker sores or cold sores**—one of the main causes for mouth sores is emotional stress.
- **Teeth grinding and/or temporomandibular joint disorder (TMD)**—stress can cause constant worrying and thinking, which can affect your body when it's asleep and cause you to grind your teeth. If you find yourself stressed before you go to sleep or having headaches when you wake up, you may be grinding your teeth at night.
- **Constant clenching of the teeth**—stress can cause you to clench your teeth in the middle of a thought or action without you even realizing it, which can have an effect on your teeth.
- **Poor oral hygiene**—if you're feeling stressed and have too much to do, you may find yourself not having the time to brush your teeth or floss regularly.

- **Poor diet/nutrition**—having a poor diet as a result of stress can cause a lack in the vitamins and nutrients that you need to be healthy.
- **Gum disease or worsening of existing gum disease**—stress can affect your immune system and can cause damage to your gums.



- **Missing regular dental appointments**—you may find yourself having too much to do to see your dentist regularly.
- **Dry mouth**—stress is one of the main reasons you could have a dry mouth. You may find yourself having a dry mouth before a stressful appointment or presentation for example. This causes a lack of saliva in your mouth and saliva has many oral health benefits, including washing away food particles from your teeth and gums.

## ? How can you deal with stress

- Find relaxing techniques to help manage your stress
- Keep up with your oral hygiene technique at home
- Visit your dentist for regular check-ups and cleanings
- Stay active—exercise can help with stress
- Get plenty of sleep
- Eat a healthy, balanced diet



Conceal  
with  
**Color**

**Ladies:** Choose a medium coral or light red lipstick. These colors make your teeth look whiter, whereas lighter-colored lipsticks tend to bring out the yellow in teeth.





# You're not alone

When my mother told me she had breast cancer I was sad and felt so alone. I wanted to be strong but that was hard.

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