
Dental Phobias

Odontophobia. You may have it, you may not. Odontophobia is more commonly known as a fear of the dentist or of dental treatments.

In some cases, a fear of the dentist may stop of from visiting for your routine check-up, or even delaying having treatment. This may mean you would rather spend time in dental pain than coming to see us to get it put at ease. In some cases, dental treatment could have been avoided if the initial check-up had been kept.

Dental anxiety can be relatively easy to overcome, and often, it is the help of a kind and caring dentist that helps to achieve this. At River Dental, we have seen many nervous patients who have gone on to confidently return for check-ups and even treatments. It is our priority that you feel relaxed when you visit us, so if you suffer from a dental phobia, try these 5 steps to see if they ease your mind.

1. Talk to your dentist. This may seem like a daunting first step. However, our dentists have seen many nervous patients over the years and are able to talk you through any initial concerns you may have.
2. Confide in a friend or family member. Talking to someone you already know about it may make your worries seem less overwhelming. They may even be willing to accompany you to your appointment so you have a familiar face with you.
3. Talk to others with dental phobias. There are number of online forums for people who are phobic of visiting the dentist. Here, people can find answers and support, as well as making you feel less isolated. You may be able to discuss how others were able to overcome fears of visiting the dentist and adapt them to suit you.
4. Let go of bad memories. This may be one of those points that is easier to day than do. Most phobias of the dentist can be linked back to bad experiences from childhood. A Phobia can be triggered by memories of unfriendly staff, clinical smells, or the sound of the drill. It is important to remember that dental practices are not the places they once were. You will still notice the smells and sounds, but the drills are a lot quieter, and many of the instruments used are much less noticeable than they were in past years. Re
5. laxation exercises. If you are able to make it to the practice, then find yourself starting to panic, you can adopt some of the following methods to help calm yourself down:
 - Breathe in, imagining you are filling your lungs up from the bottom to the top.
 - Sit comfortably, try to relax your toes, then your feet, then your legs, working your way up your body until you reach the top of your head.
 - Breathe in through you nose and out through your mouth.
 - Breathe out through pursed lips while you relax the muscles in your face, jaw, shoulders, and stomach.
 - Try the 7-11 breathing technique. Breathe in for the count of 7, then out for the count of 11. If you are unable to reach these numbers, try breathing in to the count of 3 and out to the count of 5.

It is important that you discuss any concerns you have with the team before your appointment,

that way we can make sure to give you any additional time you may need during the appointment.