



What to Bring to Your First Dental Appointment

Your first dental appointment is an important step toward improving your oral health. Being prepared can help your visit go more smoothly, save time, and ensure that your dental team has the information they need to provide safe and effective care.

Whether you are visiting a dentist for a routine checkup or because of a dental problem, bringing the right documents and information can make the experience easier.

Bring a Photo ID

Most dental offices will ask for a government-issued photo ID when you check in.

Examples include:

- Driver's license
- State identification card
- Passport
- Other government-issued identification

This helps verify your identity and complete registration.

Bring Your Dental Insurance Card

If you have dental insurance, bring:

- Your insurance card
- Your member ID number
- Any additional insurance information requested by the office

Providing accurate insurance information helps the office verify your benefits before treatment.

Complete Patient Forms

Many offices ask new patients to complete health history and registration forms.

You may be asked about:

- Medical conditions
- Previous surgeries
- Allergies
- Current medications
- Emergency contact information

Some offices allow you to complete these forms online before your appointment.

Bring a List of Medications

Tell your dentist about every medication you take, including:

- Prescription medications
- Over-the-counter medicines
- Vitamins
- Herbal supplements

Some medications can affect your oral health or interact with dental treatment.

Share Your Medical History

Certain medical conditions may affect dental care.

Inform your dentist if you have:

- Diabetes
- Heart disease
- High blood pressure
- Bleeding disorders
- Osteoporosis
- Kidney disease
- Autoimmune conditions
- Recent surgeries

Always provide updated medical information.

Tell Your Dentist About Allergies

Inform the dental team if you are allergic to:

- Medications
- Latex
- Metals
- Foods
- Anesthetics
- Other substances

This information helps your dental team provide safe care.

Bring Previous Dental Records (If Available)

If you have recently seen another dentist, ask whether your records or X-rays can be transferred.

Previous records may help your new dentist:

- Compare changes over time.
- Avoid repeating unnecessary X-rays.
- Better understand your dental history.

If you do not have previous records, do not worry—your new dental office can perform a complete evaluation.

Prepare Your Questions

Your appointment is a good opportunity to ask questions about your oral health.

Examples include:

- How can I improve my brushing technique?
- Do I need X-rays?
- Am I at risk for gum disease?
- What treatments do you recommend?
- How often should I return for checkups?

There are no "bad" questions when it comes to your health.

Arrive Early

Many offices recommend arriving **10–15 minutes early**, especially for your first visit.

This gives you time to:

- Complete paperwork
- Verify insurance
- Ask questions before your appointment begins

Be Honest About Your Concerns

If you have dental anxiety, financial concerns, or previous negative dental experiences, let your dental team know.

Many dental professionals are experienced in helping patients feel more comfortable and can discuss treatment options that meet your needs.

Key Takeaways

- Bring a photo ID and your dental insurance information.
- Be prepared to discuss your medical history and medications.
- Inform your dentist about allergies and health conditions.
- Bring previous dental records if available.
- Prepare questions and arrive early for your appointment.

References

- American Dental Association (ADA)
- National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)