

AND ANOTHER THING...

How to Choose the Right Dental Practice

A Doctor at The Center for Dental Excellence discusses what to look for.

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Community Contributor



Charles Greenebaum, DDS
Photo courtesy of The Center for Dental Excellence

So you just broke a tooth and don't have a dentist. Your friend says you will probably need a crown. When you ask her who her dentist is, she winces and says that she wouldn't recommend going to that office.

What do you do? How do you find a dentist? "I know, I will just call some dentists in the yellow pages and see how much they charge for a crown."

Bad idea!!! You are not comparing the cost of socks. You need to find someone who will take care of your tooth with a high level of expertise, in a timely, comfortable manner at a fair fee.

If an emergency arises and you don't have a dentist, you may be forced to have treatment by anyone who will see you. You may get lucky, but try to develop a relationship with a dentist prior to any emergency situation arising. That way you won't be sorry.

Finding the Right One

OK, so how do you find a great dentist?

When you do call a dental office, the initial conversation will tell you a great deal about the practice. Look for an office that has people who answer in a cheery voice, introduce themselves, are polite, appear organized and want to help you.

Remember, this does not happen by accident. It is an indication of the dentist's drive for quality. Yes, the doctor who trains the staff to be exceptional will also most likely provide the highest standard of care.

Most people spend more time planning their next trip than finding a new dentist. If you are interested in joining a practice, make arrangements to meet the dentist prior to any treatment. The staff at a quality office would be happy to make an appointment for a complimentary consultation.

Remember that you are interviewing someone to entrust with the job of taking care of your mouth; something very precious. Look for a clean, modern office. Find someone who wants to get to know you as an individual, communicates with you, spends a lot of time with you, examines your mouth completely

and thoroughly, communicates the findings with you, develops a plan along with you based on your specific wants, needs and budget.

The practice should provide great service in every aspect of your care. This has to be a relationship in which both you and your dentist are committed to your dental health and your needs.

"I have heard it so many times from patients in this situation. I wish I had met you years ago. I wouldn't have avoided the dentist all these years and would still have my teeth."

Dr. Charles Greenebaum

If you go to a dentist who doesn't discuss the condition of your mouth with you and the various treatment alternatives, find someone else. If you are not comfortable with the doctor because he or she hurts you, doesn't run on time, has a miserable staff, has a dirty, disorganized office or anything else that bothers you, find another dentist. These kinds of issues may cause you to put off coming in for treatment and you will ultimately lose.

Horror Stories

I see many patients who convey horror stories about past relationships with dentists. These past experiences have prevented them from returning to the dentist until they are in so much pain they have no choice but to seek treatment. At this point, it's often too late and marks the beginning of the end in terms of their teeth.

I have heard it so many times from patients in this situation. "I wish I had met you years ago. I wouldn't have avoided the dentist all these years and would still have my teeth."

If you are not a member of a dental practice, start the search today. We are confident that you will find a dentist who you are comfortable with and will be there for you. Good luck.

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