



OPERATIVE APPOINTMENT

HOW DO WE TAKE CARE OF YOUR CHILD'S CAVITY?

The size and location of the cavity often dictates the treatment we can provide. When possible, we always start with a conservative white, composite resin filling. If decay is more advanced, treatment may be limited to a stainless-steel crown for molars or a porcelain crown for incisors or canines. Pulpotomies and pulpectomies (the equivalent of a baby tooth root canals) may be necessary if the decay is large or your child is experiencing symptoms. And for more advanced decay or teeth close to exfoliation, tooth extraction (pulling) may be required.

HOW DO WE CARE FOR YOUR CHILD DURING A PROCEDURE?

Your child's mental well being is just as important to us as their oral health. Our goal is to provide dental care in a kind, compassionate manner suited to their ability to tolerate treatment and cooperate in the clinic. For those who may be unable to cooperate or tolerate the treatment needed in the clinic, we have the option of, and are specialty trained in, taking children to the operating room under general anesthesia. However, for those who can tolerate and cooperate for their treatment in the clinic, we have a number of suggestions to help us give your child the best experience possible:

Morning appointments – Attention span is often the most limiting factor when performing treatment. We find that children's attention span is much better earlier in the day. Try to schedule treatment before noon, if possible.

Nitrous Oxide/Laughing gas – We always use nitrous oxide when performing treatment. Nitrous oxide is safe and effective at relaxing your child and extending their attention span (it even helps with pain control). Nausea and vomiting is rare, but the most common complication (<1%). A light meal two hours prior to the appointment will help your child avoid this complication.

Keep the conversation simple – As parents, we want to prepare our children for new or difficult experiences. However, we often see parents prepare children without having a full explanation that their children can understand or process. This can lead to unanswered questions and anxieties. We encourage parents to limit conversations to "we missed some spots with our brushing, they will help clean up the spots we missed." This allows you to focus on home care routines and allows our team to explain as we go or after we have done portions of the procedure, in kid friendly terms, as well as, provide the ability to play to your child's imagination and have fun with it.

Separation from parents – Allowing your child to come back on their own helps us guide the experience in a positive manner and capture your child's attention when needed. It also shows your child that you trust us to take care of them, just like a school teacher. If we encounter something your child is having a difficult time with and we can't comfortably talk them through what needs to be done, we will not force through the treatment. Instead, we will come to get you from the waiting room to help with the situation or discuss treatment alternatives.

WHAT SETS OUR TREATMENT APART?

It is worth noting that we do things a bit differently from other dentists to make your child's visit as comfortable and positive as possible.

Your child will be allowed to pick out an age-appropriate show or movie to watch on a tablet that will be mounted above their head during the procedure. In addition, they will receive noise isolating headphones to reduce the sounds of our handpieces and suction equipment.

We present our numbing agents to the children as a topical anesthetic and **avoid** the topic of shots altogether. We find that almost all (99%) of our patients have no idea they receive a shot, they only notice the numb/fuzzy effects of the anesthetic. We are able to do this because we buffer our local anesthetics and use a specialty compounded topical anesthetic rather than the basic anesthetics supplied by dental supply companies.

When providing treatment, our process involves explaining each step in child-friendly terms at appropriate times during the visit to help your child better understand what is happening and why. Allow us to do all the work. If you have specific concerns or something you think would help us provide a better experience for your child, please let us know.



WHAT TO EXPECT POST-TREATMENT

After most operative appointments your child can resume their normal activities, however there are a few important things to note.

- Your child may eat or drink immediately (with caution).
- Their lip, tongue and/or cheek may be without sensation for two or more hours. **Watch them closely.** Do not allow your child to suck or bite on their soft tissue as it could cause sever damage.
- Consuming cold, soft treats, such as popsicles and ice cream are encouraged until the numbness wears off.
- Both Tylenol/Motrin may be used for pain. Use only the recommended dosage. **DO NOT use Aspirin.**

These are general guidelines following treatment. However, It is important to listen and follow through with all instructions from the doctor and staff after treatment. Should you have any questions or concerns, please call our office.