Autism in Dentistry:
The Spectrum in an Over-Sensory Environment

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Finding a Dentist

www.AutismSpeaks.org/community/resources
Preparing For Your Visit
Helpful supplies you can purchase for your upcoming dental appointment:

- Noise cancelling headphones
- Sunglasses
- Headphones for music
- Fidget toys, Rubix cube
- Weighted blanket
- Dental kit with mirror and explorer to practice with
- Book, Crossword puzzle, Sudoku
Preparing for your Dental Visit

What you can do as the patient:
- Bring toys/stuffed animals/blankets from home that bring you comfort
- Wear a tight-fitting shirt or undershirt on the day of your appointment
- Focus on keeping your hands on your belly, taking deep breaths, and keeping your mouth open when instructed

What you can do as a parents or caregivers:
- No negative preconceived notions
- We inform, we do not ask
- Schedule a desensitization appointment
- Appointment checklist

- X-rays
- Clean
- Floss
- Exam
- Practice brushing
Your First Visit
Mirror and Explorer
Air/water

Suction
What to expect:

Going to the Dentist

Going to the dentist can be a scary thing. Sometimes, knowing what will happen ahead of time can help. This video will show you what a visit to the dentist will be like.
Speak up!
Don’t be afraid to ask for modifications

- Private operatories
- Limit the number of people in the room
- Desensitization visit
- Minimize waiting room time
- Turning down the lights and utilizing a headlight
- Call ahead and ask about wait time, see if you can wait in the car if they’re running behind
- Short appointment times
- Hand mirror so you can watch what’s happening
Things we do that help our patients:

- Tell-show-do
- Referrals to speech pathologist for young children who are non-verbal
- Gaggers
- Sedation: Only as a last resort!!
  - Oral (pill)
  - Inhalation (nitrous oxide gas)
  - A combination of the two
  - IV Moderate or Deep sedation
  - General Anesthesia
Right After Your Visit:

Treat Yo Self

https://www.tiktok.com/@annavausmusic/video/7202393845559069995
Days After Your Visit: Home Hygiene

https://www.tiktok.com/@annavausmusic/video/7202393845559069995
Supplies you can purchase to help with dental care at home

- Soft-bristled toothbrush
- Electric toothbrush
- Waterpik
- Fruit-Flavored toothpaste
  - Crest Sparkle
  - Avoid Colgate Total
- Floss picks
- Disney Magic Timer App
- Plaque disclosing rinses
  - Listerine Smart Rinse
  - Available in different flavors, contains fluoride which will help remineralize and protect the teeth
Home Care

- Greater risk of cavities in ASD
- Prescription toothpaste
- You will likely need to help your kids brush or create some kind of accountability or rewards system
- Bring spin brush to appts
Water Flossers
References


Perry, M. Duong, M. (March 2018). Autism Lecture. ATSU-ASDOH Didactic Curriculum. Mesa, AZ.
Questions?