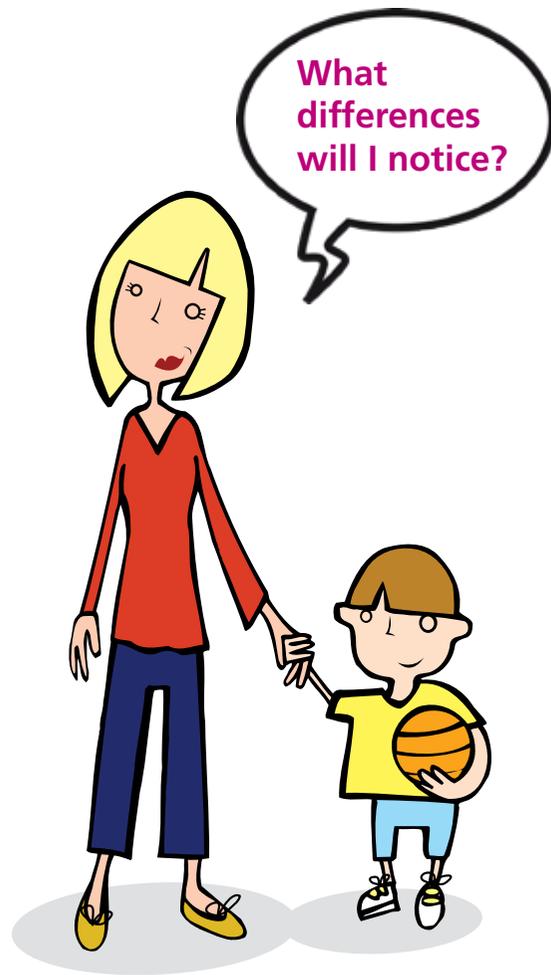


Oral health assessment

Patient information



Your dentist is helping the Government to make NHS dentistry better. This leaflet tells you what this means for you.

Your dentist is taking part in a trial. The trial will test a new way of helping you and your dentist to work more closely together to keep your mouth as healthy as possible, as well as making sure that you get all the right treatment and advice.

A total of 70 dental practices in England are taking part in this trial.

What differences will I notice when I come for my appointment?

There will not be many differences – you might notice that your initial check-up is a bit longer, and you might be asked more questions than usual. This is called an 'oral health assessment' and is new. The oral health assessment will help your dentist to work out a care plan especially for you. He or she will use your care plan every time you come back for check-ups in future to make sure that all the advice, information and treatment being given are keeping your mouth as healthy as possible.

For further information on NHS dental services and dental charges, see the more detailed *Guide to NHS dental services in England*, which is available in the Publications section of the Department of Health website at www.dh.gov.uk. Or ask your dentist or primary care trust (PCT) for help. You can find your PCT's contact details in the NHS Authorities and Trusts section of the NHS Choices website at www.nhs.uk/ServiceDirectories

What happens in an oral health assessment?

You will be asked some questions about yourself and your health. Your answers will be recorded on the computer in the system.

These are the kinds of questions you will be asked:

Your contact details – this is so that your dentist can get in touch with you if he or she needs to.

Your medical history – the health of your mouth is part of your general health. This means that it is important to tell your dentist about any medical conditions that you have. Also, your dentist needs to know whether you are taking any medicine and what it is as it may affect the treatment you can be given. You also need to tell your dentist about any allergies that you have – such as an allergy to penicillin or latex gloves. This will ensure that your dentist doesn't give you anything, or use anything, that could be harmful to you.

Your dental history – in order to plan ahead for your dental care, your dentist needs to know how healthy your mouth has been in the past, and what treatment you have already had. He or she will talk to you about this and will also examine your mouth and gums. This will help to tell how likely you are to have dental problems in the future. Some of these problems can be stopped easily. Your dentist will tell you what you can do to stop them, such as:

- eating less sugar
- brushing and flossing your teeth better
- using toothpaste with fluoride in it.

Why does the dentist need all this information?

The information you give will help your dentist to know the best way to care for your mouth and to treat any problems that you have.

What happens after the oral health assessment?

The dentist will talk with you about the information you have given and about what they have seen by looking inside your mouth. This will help you and your dentist to work out a care plan – and this will be written out so that you and your dentist can work together in future to make your mouth healthy, and keep it healthy.

When should I come back and see the dentist for another check-up?

This will depend on how healthy your mouth is. If everything is alright, you might not need another check-up for a while. If there are any problems, you could be asked to come back sooner – especially for extra help with keeping your mouth healthy. At each check-up, your dentist will look over your care plan again to make sure that it still includes everything you need to keep your mouth healthy.

Are the NHS charges being changed?

No. The normal NHS dental charges are still the same. To check what the costs are, and to find out if you don't have to pay charges, ask your dentist for a copy of the 2011/12 patient charges leaflet produced by the Department of Health called *NHS dental services in England*, or see the dental costs page of the NHS Choices website at www.nhs.uk

Will my appointment take longer than usual?

You might need a longer initial appointment than usual. This is because the oral health assessment checks more things and may take longer than a normal check-up. The receptionist can tell you how long your appointment is likely to be.

How will I know what my care plan involves?

After your check-up, your dentist will give you a care plan that tells you about how healthy your mouth is. It will also tell you what you can do to keep your mouth healthy and what the dentist will do. If you need any treatment, you will also get a treatment plan. The plan will say what treatment you need to have, and what you will need to pay. It will also tell you when you should come back for another appointment.

Your dentist will ask you to sign your treatment plan and keep it in a safe place.

You will be able to have all the treatment provided under the NHS that your dentist feels you need to keep your mouth healthy.

