



Preparing for the Dental Appointment

BQIS Fact Sheets provide a general overview on topics important to supporting an individual's health and safety and to improving their quality of life. This is the second of four Fact Sheets regarding dental appointments.

Intended Outcomes

Reader will understand how to prepare for a dental appointment, what information is essential to bring to an appointment, and what needs to be considered in preparing an individual for an appointment.

Definitions

Dental Health Provider: Any dentist, dental hygienist, or clinician that requires an appointment and evaluation to provide services and recommendations to an individual.

Facts

- A dental health care provider may cancel an appointment if the person arrives late, per their practice.
- A dental health care provider may discharge an individual from services if there is a pattern of missed appointments.
- To maximize effectiveness of a dental appointment, it is essential that the person accompanying the individual to the appointment:
 - Knows the person
 - Understands the purpose of the appointment
 - Communicates on behalf of the person as needed
 - Understands what to bring to the appointment.

Recommended Actions and Prevention Strategies

1. Make sure pre-appointment medication, if any, is available in the home the day prior to the appointment.
2. Take important information to the appointment:
 - Name and contact information of guardian/health care representative
 - Insurance cards and photo identification



HEALTH & SAFETY: DENTAL APPOINTMENT

FACT SHEET

- List of current medications and medication history (if available), including medicine that was recently changed, reason for the change, and any problems with medications in the past
 - Medical/surgical/ dental history, current dental X-rays, and other pertinent information related to the appointment
 - Information /questions provided by the individual's support team including events leading up to current problem/issue
 - Completed health care visit/consultation form, as used by the agency, with reason for appointment written on it. Make sure that the person's name is on this form.
 - Contact information, directions, and parking information for the dental office
 - List of other current health care providers for the person with their contact information
 - Name, phone, and fax number of a contact person from the provider agency, if applicable
 - Name, location, phone, and fax number of preferred pharmacy
3. Prepare the individual:
- Obtain orders about eating or holding medication as needed.
 - Give any necessary routine and PRN (definition) medication as ordered.
 - Make sure the individual has time to have personal hygiene needs met and time to eat (if allowed) prior to the appointment. Ensure teeth are brushed.
 - Make sure the individual is clean and dressed appropriately in clothing that can be easily removed if needed.
 - Prepare snacks and drinks as needed, especially if a long distance to the appointment. If snacks are eaten prior to appointment ensure that teeth are brushed.
 - Prepare necessary supplies for hygiene needs such as wipes, adult undergarments, a change of clothing, toothbrush, and toothpaste.
 - Prepare activities, items to keep the individual occupied in the event you have to wait.
 - Explain what will happen in language appropriate for the individual's level of understanding and anxiety, with input from the support team.



- Provide desensitization (reducing the likelihood of negative reaction) as needed and as outlined in the individual's Behavior Support Plan (BSP).
 - Allow appropriate travel time to prevent rushing the individual. If running late for any reason, notify the dental office and let them know of the situation and anticipated arrival time and verify whether the health care provider can still see the individual.
 - Arrive 10-15 minutes early, particularly if first appointment, unless otherwise directed by provider's office.
4. Staff should notify their supervisor if they have any question regarding an upcoming appointment.

Learning Assessment

The following questions can be used to verify a person's competency regarding the material contained in this Fact Sheet:

1. True or False: A dental office will always give a person three (3) chances to make the scheduled appointments.
2. It is important to bring the following to an appointment:
 - A. Insurance information
 - B. List of current medications
 - C. Health history information
 - D. All of the above
3. If you are unsure of the reason for an appointment:
 - A. Go ahead and the dental office will figure it out
 - B. Call someone to get the needed information
 - C. Cancel the appointment immediately



References

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Related Resources

Dental Appointment Series Fact Sheets: Initial Contact, During the Dental Appointment, and After the Dental Appointment

Managing Appointment Series Fact Sheets: Initial Contact, Preparing for the Health Care Appointment, During the Appointment, and After the Appointment

Managing Appointment Series Checklists: Initial Contact, Preparing for the Health Care Appointment, During the Appointment, and After the Appointment

These resources can be located on the BQIS Fact Sheet & Reminders webpage at: <http://www.in.gov/fssa/ddrs/3948.htm>.

Learning Assessment Answers

1. False
2. D
3. B