

What to Ask when Contacting a Dental Office

This guide will help parents/caregivers of children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities with questions to ask when calling a dental office for an appointment.

1 Does this dental office have any experience with treating individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), and do you provide scheduled appointments, or do you save a block of time to schedule appointments?

Explain how your dental office manage anxiety to the dentist and avoiding long crowded waiting times and waiting rooms. Share any experiences or activities from previous dental visits

2 This individual has XYZ issues/disabilities, are you familiar with those?

Everyone is unique, so are their issues and disabilities. This question will help you assess if the dentist and staff have experience dealing with individuals with specific disabilities or associated conditions

3 Does your dental office allow a tour prior to the appointment?

Visits in advance can help the person with I/DD get familiar to the dental office.

4 Would you be open to discussing behavior support strategies that have previously worked?

For example, talking about what will happen during the office visit, providing a non-verbal communication system (picture cards for “yes/no” or “stop/go”), or positive verbal reinforcement.

5 Does your office provide low stimulation treatment rooms and environment?

For example, calming music, dimmed lightning, and low noise environment.

6 Do you provide any comfort devices?

For example, weighted blankets.

7 Do you provide or can an individual with I/DD bring distractions?

For example, dark glasses, headphones, tablets or televisions in exam rooms.

8 Is your office willing or able to take extra time for procedures?

The dental staff may have to do a lot of explaining and comforting to ensure that the teeth and gums can be thoroughly checked.

9 Does your office have the option to use any of these services below if necessary?

a. Papoose board b. sedation c. anesthesia. It's best to know if the dental provider has privileges at any local hospital or ambulatory surgical center if treatment needs to be provided in this setting.

Notes
