



Dental Treatment Pain Management for Children and Adults

After a dental procedure, you or your child may experience some pain or discomfort. This is a normal part of the healing process.

Some common procedures that may require pain management include oral surgery, like tooth extractions, and root canal therapy. Use this as a guide to work with your dentist to effectively and safely manage pain.



Know your pain management options

The pain caused by most dental procedures usually doesn't last more than a few days and can often be managed with over-the-counter pain medications like ibuprofen and acetaminophen.

Ibuprofen (such as Advil or Motrin) is a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) that helps reduce the pain and swelling you may feel after treatment.

You can take NSAIDs shortly before your dental procedure to help minimize pain.

Acetaminophen (such as Tylenol) is another common pain relief medication. It's used to decrease fever and pain, but unlike ibuprofen, acetaminophen does not help reduce inflammation that may lead to pain.



Ask your dentist

If your dentist prescribes an opioid medication, here are some questions to ask:

1. Are there non-opioid alternatives that can appropriately manage the pain and swelling?
2. What is the least amount of medication I or my child can take, for the shortest amount of time, to best manage pain and swelling?
3. What are the side effects and risks of the medication?
4. What are the potential drug interactions with other medications?
5. What else can be done to manage pain and swelling?
6. How do I securely store medication?
7. How do I properly dispose of any unused medication?



Share family and personal health history

If there's a history of addiction in your family, let your dentist know.

Research shows genetics — or biological factors — play a key role in the development of addictions. Knowing your family history helps your dentist provide better care and pain management.

Additionally, tell your dentist if you have a personal history of addiction. You worked hard to be healthy. Sharing your journey helps your dentist ensure you stay on the path to wellness.

Follow us online for helpful tips to keep your smile healthy and get the most from your dental benefits.

