

**The 10 Questions
You MUST Ask
BEFORE Choosing
A Dentist!**

**A Consumer's Guide To
Quality Dental Care.**

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The purpose of this guide is to help you choose the right dental services for you by arming you with 10 important questions you should ask any dental office BEFORE agreeing to care. We are sharing insider secrets with you that most consumers don't know. So let's begin...

Dental care is more comfortable, accurate, methodical, and practically pain free now than it ever has been. When most people think of going to the dentist, they think of pain, being uncomfortable, and are most likely scared. However, with new methods and advancements in dentistry, you can have more comfortable care with less pain and anxiety.

In the past, people only thought of going to the dentist only when they were in pain, when now it is common to go to the dentist to prevent cavities and root canals, as well as make your teeth whiter, more attractive, straighter, stronger, and to treat and prevent gum disease.

So if you are experiencing oral pain, bleeding gums, missing teeth, or are looking for a straighter, more beautiful smile for you or your family ...then a dentist may be the right choice for you!

**But Before You Are Convinced That Any
Dentist Can Help You, You Must Be Aware That Not All Dentists
Are The Same, And Choosing The Wrong Dentist Could Be A Big
Mistake!**

In a moment, you will discover 10 questions you must ask before choosing any dentist. But first, let's review what most dentists do, so you know why dentistry is so popular and effective for basic family care and for cosmetics, orthodontics, dentures, crowns and bridges and so much more!

Dentists do a wide range of things, from relieving pain, to pulling teeth, to assisting patients in achieving the whiter, brighter, more beautiful smile that they've always wanted. Some dentists specialize in helping people with getting stronger, more reliable teeth with procedures like placing crowns and bridges, some specialize in straightening teeth with braces which can take a couple years and some dentists specialize in assisting people in getting straighter teeth quickly and easily with a number of other, more cosmetic, treatment options.

So what should you ask a dentist BEFORE agreeing to care? Let's review these issues now:

Prior to care, a dentist should ask detailed questions about your past and present dental health, and order x-rays or other tests when necessary.

Whether you go to see the dentist for basic dental care or for cosmetic improvements, he or she should be looking for potential problems, such as cavities, gum disease, oral cancer, cracked teeth, weakened and oversized fillings, as well as ways to improve the strength, healthiness, and appearance of your teeth and smile. Then he or she will come up with a diagnosis and a Recommended Action Plan. So for starters...

Do NOT agree to get care from any dentist that does not first provide you with a very clear explanation of:

- 1. What is causing or contributing to your problem,**
- 2. An estimate of the costs involved, and**
- 3. A Recommended Action Plan that details what specific care is needed...and why.**

Unfortunately, there are a small number of doctors, including Dentists who treat every patient pretty much the same, regardless of their condition.

As you would expect, there's a lot the doctor must know before you can decide what care is best for you, in your specific situation. He or she will want to know if your problem is caused, or aggravated by anything such as a broken tooth, missing tooth, or some structural problem. Or...is it a simple problem that can be resolved within a reasonable period of time?

Here's what you should know, and the 10 questions you must ask before choosing a dentist:

1. "What areas do you specialize in?" – The correct answer is: Some dentists are only proficient in treating certain conditions or doing certain treatments. Some doctors may specialize in implants, orthodontics, TMJ, cosmetics, family dentistry, and the list goes on. The problem is that some dentists have only done one or two cases for a certain condition, and this may not be to your benefit if you want someone more experienced.

2. "Do you take x-rays when necessary?" – Be sure to seek a dentist who takes x-rays to rule out fracture or a gross pathology (English translation – some other serious problem) as indicated by the consultation, health history and exam. Caring for a patient without x-rays is like flying in the dark without radar. Unfortunately, there are some serious conditions that can first express themselves with oral, or bone pain. There are some really quick and fast ways a dentist can now use X-rays, so you can watch them on T.V. and he or she can show you what exactly is wrong and what the best treatment option would be. We often do this in our office. Our Digital x-rays

lower radiation levels by up to 90% when compared to the old film type x-rays! If the doctor you're consulting doesn't take x-rays before recommending treatment, you should consider talking to another dentist.

3. “Will you give me your recommendations in writing?” – This is very important. This allows you to go home and think about it before making a decision. Plus, it gives you an explanation up front of what the care will consist of, how long it will take, and how much it will cost.

4. “Can you furnish me with references?” - Ask for four references. Two of these references should be current patients, and the other two should be other health care professionals like other dentists. There are three reasons for getting patient and professional references. First, any person in practice should have at least three satisfied patients they can provide you with. Secondly, if a dentist cannot produce two other professionals that will attest to his or her ability as a dentist, he or she may not be respected by his or her peers.

Last, other professionals in the community see all kinds of things, and will usually be aware of what kind of care is available, and what kind of quality is provided by different folks. Feel free to call the references you receive. You can never learn too much about the person you are considering using for your dental needs. Take the few minutes to talk to these people.

5. “Do you have payment plans available?”- Successful practices usually allow patients to make payments. For example, most dentists allow both cash and insurance patients to spread out their entire care, deductibles and co-pays into low monthly installments often with no interest by using a special credit line. This allows them to get the care they want without financial stress. Some dental practices will be able to work with you on the payments, whether you're covered by insurance or not.

6. “Will you guarantee my satisfaction?” By law healthcare providers including dentists cannot guarantee results. But, for example, an office that offers the following warranty: “We'll replace any treatment that we do that fails or apply any investment you made to additional treatment if necessary” shows you that they are putting their money where their mouth is. That's how we stand behind our treatment at our practice. Make sure the doctor you choose is willing to stand behind their care.

7. “Do you have a no waiting policy?” – A recent patient survey revealed that what irritates patients the most is when the doctor and the staff do not respect their time and make them wait excessively in the waiting room. Now often unforeseen circumstances occur such as an unscheduled patient who was up all night in agonizing pain needing treatment. I'm sure most waiting patients would understand that. But some offices routinely overbook kind of like an

airline and then you get bumped, except you don't get any free tickets at most dentists. Now most doctors claim their patients don't have to wait excessively. If the doctor you're talking to isn't willing to make such a waiting time agreement or compensation, they may not be as respectful of your time as you deserve.

8. “Do you have criteria for determining how many visits I need?” Some doctors do not have an objective method to determine how many visits are necessary to relieve your pain, or get you the desired result you are looking for, and to maintain your newly found state of excellent health. They make subjective guesses about your initial treatment and progress. I do progress exams along the way to make sure we are on track. This procedure tells us exactly when we are done with the initial care, and how we are doing in maintaining the results you are looking for. That way you don't get more visits than you actually need. Make sure to find out how the dentist you're talking to measures progress, and whether it's routine or not.

9. “Will you show me ways of preventing what you are treating?” – I saw a sign the other day in another dentist's office that read, “Support your dentist, eat more candy”. Although I know he's joking, we spend a considerable amount of time customizing simple and easy ways for you to keep your gums and teeth healthy...no matter what current problem you or your family is having. You'll be thrilled to find out how quick and easy it is to prevent continuous and unnecessary dental problems. This ensures that you and your family will get the most out of your office visits, decrease the chance of having dental problems, and in the long run save you money!

10. “Do you offer free consultations (or low cost New Patient Exams)?” – There's no way a doctor should expect a patient to choose him or her without first visiting the office to see if the office, staff and doctor is for them. This will also give you a chance to talk to any of our patients while they are coming in and going out. Initially, I provide a FREE, NO OBLIGATION, consultation to determine if I can help you and answer any questions you may have about your condition or my treatment. No one in my office is going to pressure you into care. This is simply a chance for you to meet us, and see if our services can benefit you. If after your free consultation, you decide you do not want to proceed with an exam, you simply leave and that is that. If however, you do find that you could use our help, we will discuss the details of how we proceed from there.

Well I hope this information will give you the confidence in taking the first step to regaining your health by experiencing the benefits of dental care. By the way, we do:

- Cosmetics and Family dentistry
- Employ diagnostic tests such as x-rays

- Furnish you our recommendations and expected cost in writing
- Furnish you with patient and professional references upon request
- Offer payment plans with a special line of credit
- Stand behind our treatment
- Provide you custom designed prevention techniques
- Urge you to tour my office and take advantage of my free, absolutely no-obligation consultation to discuss your situation.

If you are ready to make an appointment for your free consultation call my office at **619-427-0810** now, while this fresh on your mind...and you know EXACTLY what questions to ask BEFORE using me as your cosmetic or family dentist.

I hope this information has been helpful, and that whether you choose to come in to see us or not, that you've benefited from the knowledge you've been given. No matter what you decide to do, I wish you the best of health!

Sincerely,

Dr. Sam J. Halabo

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Call Now to schedule your Free Consultation!

619-427-0810