

# How to Ask Your Dentist About Accessibility Features



## *A Resource for Patients*

If you have a physical disability, sensory sensitivities, or need extra support, it's important to let your dentist office know what supports you need.

- Here is a simple guide to help you write down the different supports you need so you can ask about accessibility.

### 1. Get Prepared and Know What You Need

The first step is to make sure you know which kinds of supports you need when going to the dentist's office. Spend a few minutes writing down the things that would help you feel most comfortable. You can use the tool, *Patient Form for Sharing Accessibility Needs*, to help you document your support needs. Make sure you think about the different types of support you need in each of the following categories:

- Mobility aids
- Communication
- Sensory issues
- Emotional needs
- Additional support needs for the visit

My Notes:

---

---

---

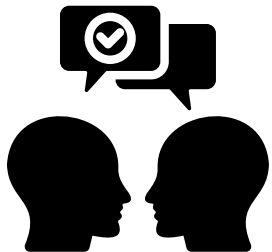
## 2. Prepare the Questions You Want to Ask

Now that you have all your support needs in one place, you are ready to decide which questions you want to ask the staff at the dentist office. We have included several example questions below. You can pick the questions from this list that relate to your support needs.



### Physical Accessibility

- Do you have wheelchair ramps?
- Do you have accessible entrances?
- Are there accessible parking spots near the entrance?
- How wide are your door frames?
- Do you have an exam table or dental chair that can be lowered?
- Can I get help moving around the office if I need to move from one room to the other?
- Is there enough physical space in the office for the mobility aid to be kept nearby?



### Communication Support

- Do you offer sign language interpreters or listening devices?
- Do you have handouts with information I might need?
- Do you have picture boards that describe procedures?
- Can I get extra time to communicate or understand information?
- Can I request information in simple language or with pictures?

My Notes:

---

---

---

## Sensory and Emotional Accommodations



- Is the environment quiet and calm? Or is there a quiet and calm space I can use?
- Can I take breaks if I feel overwhelmed?
- Can I bring a support person for comfort?
- Do you have a sensory supportive environment? For example, low lighting options, weighted blankets, or stress balls? If not, can I bring in my own supportive materials? I would like to bring \_\_\_\_\_



## Check Equipment and Support

- Do you have adjustable dental chairs or adaptive tools that can help me, such as a back support?
- Are staff trained to use assistive devices?
- Does your office any protective stabilization devices such as a Papoose Board?



## Preparing Before the Visit

- Can I tour the office before scheduling an appointment?
- If I cannot visit the office before my appointment, do you have a video recording of what the office looks like so I can prepare for my appointment?
- Do you have any support tools or materials I can review to prepare for my visit?

My Notes:

---

---

---

---