

Dental Anxiety Treatment | Smile Solutions

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medication such as diazepam can be prescribed by your clinician before your appointment to help you feel more relaxed. – Inhalation nitrous oxide sedation: a safe, gentle option during treatment to help you feel calm and comfortable. – Sleep dentistry and general anaesthesia: administered by specialist anaesthetists, available both in-clinic and in hospital for more complex procedures.

Practical strategies for managing dental anxiety

- 1 Focus on slow, regular breathing During your dental appointment, concentrate on breathing slowly and steadily. When we feel nervous, we often hold our breath, which lowers oxygen levels and can intensify feelings of panic.
- 2 Use distractions to stay calm If the sound of the drill makes you anxious, listening to music through our headphones can help. Many Smile Solutions treatment rooms also have digital screens to help you relax and lose awareness of your surroundings.
- 3 Avoid caffeine beforehand Try to avoid caffeine before your appointment, as it can elevate your heart rate and contribute to increased anxiety. Be sure to express your anxiety to your dentist, specialist or hygienist, as well as the Smile Solutions reception team when making your appointment. Knowing your concerns will help us to adapt treatment to your needs and to administer or prescribe medication if needed. For those suffering from extreme dental anxiety, we offer two relaxation options.

- 1 Nitrous oxide (“happy gas”) Nitrous oxide provides a mild level of relaxation and is a safe, common way to relieve anxiety during dental treatment. In the comfort of our calming dental suites and under the care of a trained dentist, a mix of nitrogen and oxygen is administered through a nosepiece during your procedure.
- 2 Oral sedation A range of oral medications can be taken before your appointment to help relax your nerves. These are a common and convenient option and can be prescribed in advance by one of our experienced clinicians.
- 3 Sleep Dentistry Sleep dentistry enables dentally anxious patients to undergo dental treatment while in the deepest state of relaxation. It’s ideal for patients with a strong dental phobia who need prolonged procedures such as treatment of multiple teeth in different locations within the mouth.

Learn more about sleep dentistry

A Calm, Relaxing Environment From the moment you arrive at Smile Solutions, every aspect of our practice has been designed to help you feel comfortable and at ease. Located within Melbourne’s iconic Manchester Unity Building, our dental suites feature abundant natural light, beautiful heritage architecture, calming views across Melbourne’s CBD, and treatment rooms equipped with digital screens so you can watch something relaxing during your appointment. Spread across five floors of one of Melbourne’s most recognisable Art Deco landmarks, our practice offers a setting unlike a typical dental clinic. Heritage marble, soaring ceilings and panoramic views of landmarks including St Paul’s Cathedral and the Royal Botanic Gardens help create a peaceful atmosphere where many patients find themselves feeling surprisingly relaxed. This environment wasn’t created by chance. It reflects our belief that the space around you plays an important role in reducing dental anxiety. Our practice was designed by a founder who understands dental fear firsthand and recognised that feeling calm begins long before treatment starts. Combined with our caring team, gentle approach and modern technology, our surroundings help create a dental experience that feels welcoming, reassuring and far removed from what many people expect when they visit the dentist.

Frequently Asked Questions

I’m scared of needles – can you make injections hurt less? For patients who fear needles, Smile Solutions uses computer-controlled anaesthetic delivery systems that significantly minimise the discomfort of injections: DentaPen – cordless, computer-controlled delivery STA Wand – the gold standard for needle-phobic patients These devices deliver anaesthetic at a controlled rate and pressure, significantly reducing the sensation associated with traditional syringes.

What if I can’t even walk through the door? We understand completely. Your first consultation can be with Dr Kia Pajouhesh himself. He is happy to personally meet any patient whose anxiety is so severe they struggle to walk through the door. This consultation takes place in a friendly, non-threatening room with no dental chair and no dental equipment – just a comfortable space where you can sit and talk. You come up the escalator to Level 1, walk into reception past our calming coral aquarium and photography studio, and meet Dr Kia and one of our senior treatment coordinators in a private consultation room. No clinical environment. No pressure. Just a conversation about your concerns and how we can help. Will you judge me for not visiting a dentist in years? Absolutely not. Many of our patients come to us after 5, 10, even 20 years away from the dentist. Our clinicians are specifically trained in managing dental anxiety and will never judge you. Many of our team have been with Smile Solutions for 15 to 20 years and have helped thousands of patients in exactly your situation. Can I bring someone with me for support? Yes. Support people are welcome at every appointment.

Whether it is a partner, parent, friend, or anyone who makes you feel safer, they can sit with you during your consultation and, where practical, during treatment as well. What if I need to stop during treatment? You are always in control. Simply raise your hand at any time and your clinician will stop immediately. We build regular breaks into appointments for anxious patients and will never rush you or proceed until you are comfortable. Is nitrous oxide (laughing gas) safe? Yes. Nitrous oxide is one of the safest and most widely used sedation options in dentistry worldwide. It takes effect within minutes, wears off quickly after the mask is removed, and has been used safely in dental practices for over a century. It is suitable for adults and children alike. What about my children – can they be sedated too? Yes. Our board-registered specialist paediatric dentists are experienced in caring for children who are anxious or unable to tolerate dental treatment while awake. We believe that a child's early dental experiences can shape their confidence for years to come, so we always take a gentle, supportive approach. Depending on your child's age, needs and the treatment required, options may include: Tell-show-do communication to help children understand and feel comfortable with each step of their visit. Teddy bear therapy, a comfort-focused approach designed to help younger children feel safe and relaxed. Nitrous oxide (happy gas) to reduce anxiety while your child remains awake and responsive. General anaesthesia, administered by a specialist anaesthetist for children requiring extensive treatment or those who are unable to be treated safely while awake. This may be provided in our clinic or in a private hospital, depending on your child's individual needs. Our team understands that every child is different, and we'll recommend the most appropriate approach to help your child receive the care they need in a calm, positive and supportive environment. What if I need a lot of dental work done? If you require extensive dental treatment, we can often complete much of it in a single sedation or general anaesthesia session, reducing the need for multiple appointments and repeated injections. One of the advantages of Smile Solutions is our multidisciplinary team. Depending on your treatment needs, multiple clinicians can work together in a coordinated sequence during the same appointment. For example, an endodontist may perform root canal treatment, a periodontist may place dental implants or treat gum disease, an oral and maxillofacial surgeon may remove teeth, and a prosthodontist or general dentist may complete crowns, CEREC restorations or other restorative treatment. For patients with significant dental anxiety, this approach can be life-changing. Rather than facing several separate treatment visits, you undergo one carefully planned session and wake up with the majority of your treatment already completed. During your consultation, we'll develop a personalised treatment plan and discuss whether completing your care under sedation or general anaesthesia is the right option for you. Can I have my dental treatment performed in a hospital? Yes. For patients who need or prefer a hospital environment, our board-registered specialists can perform dental procedures under general anaesthesia in a private hospital, with care provided by a specialist anaesthetist. Hospital-based treatment may be recommended for patients requiring complex procedures, those with certain medical conditions, or people with severe dental anxiety or phobia who do not feel comfortable receiving treatment in a traditional dental setting. Smile Solutions has more than 20 board-registered specialists across six dental specialties. In Australia, only board-registered specialists are permitted to perform dental procedures in a hospital setting, giving patients confidence that they are receiving care from highly qualified clinicians. For procedures performed in our clinic under general anaesthesia, patients recover in our dedicated recovery room, where they are monitored in a calm, private environment until they are fully alert and ready to go home. During your consultation, we'll discuss your treatment options and recommend the safest and most appropriate setting based on your individual needs. Book an appointment today Book Now Contact Us Contact Us " * " indicates required fields Full Name * Phone Number Email Address * Enquiry Type * General & Cosmetic Dentistry Orthodontics & Invisalign® Specialist Care Do you have private health insurance with dental cover? Yes No Your Message * Send Message Send Message > Δ Call Us 13 13 96 Location Level 1, 220 Collins Street Manchester Unity Building, Melbourne VIC 3000 Hours Of Service Monday – Friday: 8.00am – 6.00pm Saturday: 8.30am – 1.30pm Sunday: By Appointment Our Services General Dentistry Cosmetic Dentistry Orthodontics Specialist Care Dental Implants Children's Dentistry Emergency Dentistry Why Choose Us Our Team Media Awards Careers Technology Location Holistic Dentistry Quick Links Contact Us Articles Packages & Offers Dental Payment Plans Understanding Your Treatment Sitemap Privacy Policy Copyright © Smile Solutions. All Rights Reserved. This site is

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