

CAMP HILL, Pa. (May 10, 2022) — [Dental anxiety or fear affects 36% of the population](#), often creating a barrier to getting regular cleanings. To help reduce uneasiness for these individuals, United Concordia Dental offers a few simple tips that could make trips to the dentist less stressful.

“An individual’s dental anxieties or fears can have repercussions on more than just one’s oral health,” said Katie Deffke, DDS, dental director, United Concordia. “In addition to bad breath, cavities, gum disease and tooth loss, not taking care of one’s oral health can adversely impact a person’s self-esteem, self-confidence and work life due to lost time.”

The [2021 Oral Health in America: Advances and Challenges report](#) cites U.S. productivity losses associated with untreated oral disease at \$45.9 billion in 2015.

Here are some general recommendations to help ease anxieties when visiting the dentist:

- Discuss your fears with your dentist so that strategies can be developed to lessen anxiety and increase comfort.
- If you need a few seconds during a procedure, create an agreed-upon signal to alert your dentist that you need a break.
- Practice deep breathing exercises or other meditation techniques to recenter.
- Play your favorite music or podcast in noise-canceling earbuds to help you relax.
- Practice good oral health habits in between dentist visits to prevent the development of dental issues, including decay, periodontal (gum) disease and oral cancer, as well as other oral diseases.

“The most common causes of anxiety or fear at the dentist office include fear of pain, fear of injections or feelings of helplessness while in the dental chair,” said Deffke. “Embarrassment about current dental health and negative past experiences also can contribute to a patient’s anxiety or stress about going to the dentist.”

For more oral health tips, visit the Oral Health Resources section at [UnitedConcordia.com](https://www.unitedconcordia.com).

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