

10 Top Tips Finding a Great Dentist

When selecting a dentist to entrust with your long term oral health, remember these practical and important checks:

☐ **Time in Chair & Getting to Know You**

Time allows you to ask questions, provide your full medical history and ensure that all your needs are dealt with appropriately. A thorough new patient exam including “Perio Chart” should take at least 60 minutes. A hygiene clean & polish should be 45+ minutes.

☐ **A Busy Practice, Running On Time**

If a practice is busy, it is likely they are doing great work and focussing on patient service. Ask to see a folio of work and inquire about their processes that ensure proper diagnosis and treatment. They should cater for emergencies and provide convenient opening hours.

☐ **Infection Control**

The dental surgery area and tools should appear spotless in order to eliminate cross contamination. Masks and gloves are a must and items should be placed within sterile areas, wrapped in plastic or in bags. You should feel comfortable and safe.

☐ **An In Depth Exam with Gum & Bone Charting**

“Perio Charting” should be carried out to ensure that the foundations of your teeth are healthy. This process measures the depth of gum pockets, hygienists can then focus on areas of concern. If you have healthy gums, there is less chance of developing associated diseases.

☐ **Magnification, Cameras and Digital X-ray Sensors**

Cracks and holes can be very small. Examining through magnifying lenses or using digital intra-oral cameras allows a dentist to get a far more accurate diagnosis. Digital cameras also allow an opportunity for you to see the cracks for yourself. Digital x-ray uses 90% less radiation.

☐ **Hygiene Department**

Modern dental practices will provide a dedicated hygiene department. The hygienists within this team are specifically trained to maintain healthy teeth and gums, prevention is their focus. They provide a more indepth service at the same cost as seeing a dentist.

☐ **A Range of Options and a Written Treatment Plan**

A dentist should present you with considered treatment options and explain them so that you understand the long term consequences. Before any treatment you should have a clear indication of costs, know all the issues and feel supported in your treatment decisions.

☐ **Lab Work and Quality Materials**

Ensure that your “lab work” being crowns, veneers and other sculpted work are created by experienced and Australian based Lab Technicians using long lasting, quality materials. These are the finished products that you and others will see, so make sure they’re top quality.

☐ **Continuing Training in Specific Areas**

If you are having complex work such as an implants, orthodontic braces or advanced root canal treatment ensure that the dentist has had an appropriate level of recent training in the area. This allows them to learn with experts and work on models before treating patients.

☐ **External Specialists & Partners**

When appropriate, a general dentist may suggest visiting a specialist for complex treatment such as complex implants, tricky root canals or advanced bone disease. This is a sign that they care more about your long term health outcomes and less about keeping it “in-house”.

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