

What are the benefits?

- ✚ Decreased levels of salivary cortisol
- ✚ Decreased salivary chromogranin
- ✚ Decreased serum cortisol
- ✚ Decreased galvanic skin conductance
- ✚ Decreased systolic blood pressure
- ✚ Increased blood flow
- ✚ **Decreased anxiety**



ROLE OF A DENTAL HYGIENISTS

- ✚ Know the signs of dental anxiety
- ✚ Know what therapy is appropriate for each patient
- ✚ Foster a positive environment by building rapport
 - Establishing trust
 - Effective verbal and nonverbal communication
 - Remaining calm and confident



SUMMARY

Dental anxiety can make it difficult for people to maintain regular appointments. It can also negatively impact dental procedures. To create a more pleasant experience for the anxious patient, dental professionals need to implement remedies to relieve tension regarding dental fear. There are many natural remedies to alleviate anxiety such as progressive **Muscle Relaxation Therapy, Animal-Assisted therapy** and **Aromatherapy**.

REFERENCES

- Appukuttan D. P. (2016). Strategies to manage patients with dental anxiety and dental phobia: literature review. *Clinical, cosmetic and investigational dentistry*, 8, 35–50. doi:10.2147/CCIDE.S63626
- Park, E. S., Yim, H. W., & Lee, K. S. (2019). Progressive muscle relaxation therapy to relieve dental anxiety: a randomized controlled trial. *European Journal of Oral Sciences*, 127(1), 45–51. <https://doi-org.citytech.ezproxy.cuny.edu/10.1111/eos.12585>
- Reed-Fitzke, Kayla. PhD, LMFT. Suedbeck, J.RDH, MSDH. (2019). EASING ANXIETY WITH DENTAL DOGS. *Dimensions of dental hygiene*, 1(3), 31-34.
- Zabirunnisa, M., Gadagi, J. S., Gadde, P., Myla, N., Koneru, J., & Thatimatla, C. (2014). Dental patient anxiety: Possible deal with Lavender fragrance. *Journal of research in pharmacy practice*, 3(3), 100–103. doi:10.4103/2279-042X.141116

Natural Remedies for Dental Anxiety

Have no fear, the hygienist is here!

Paulina Czerwinska
Sylvia Gines
Susan Ni



NEW YORK CITY COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY
CITY TECH

Do you have dental anxiety?

Signs and Symptoms

- ✚ Feelings of unease
- ✚ Negative thoughts before procedures begin
- ✚ Increased heart rate
- ✚ Increased blood pressure
- ✚ Increased respiration

Sounds familiar? Dental anxiety is the fifth most common cause of anxiety.

“Researchers estimate up to 80% of people experience some form of dental anxiety. Of those with dental anxiety, approximately 20% do not receive routine dental care, such as prophylaxis, and in between 9% and 15% avoid the dentist at all cost.” - Dimensions of Dental Hygiene

Alternative Solutions

- ✚ Muscle Relaxation Therapy
- ✚ Animal-Assisted Therapy
- ✚ Aromatherapy

Dental anxiety causes a cycle of delayed dental visits, to unfortunate oral health complications, to difficult procedures that can be expensive to the average patient while sustaining dental anxiety. With today's medicine having numerous side effects, not to mention the cost, it is apparent why dental offices prefer using some natural treatments.

MUSCLE RELAXATION THERAPY

- ✚ Research found that it relieves tension in patients with dental anxiety
 - Patients completed a questionnaire
 - The group that received therapy reported less feelings of anxiety compared to the group that did not

How does it work?

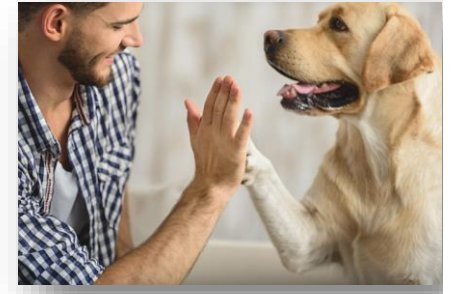
- ✚ Wear comfortable clothing
- ✚ Arrive 20 minutes before dental treatment
- ✚ Sit in a quiet, dim room
- ✚ Headphones will guide patients through therapy
 - Told to imagine a peaceful place
 - Guided to tense and relax specific muscle groups

What are the benefits?

- ✚ Lower blood pressure
- ✚ Lower pulse
- ✚ Lower salivary cortisol levels
- ✚ **Decreased anxiety**



ANIMAL-ASSISTED THERAPY



- ✚ Shown to reduced stress levels, specifically for patients who are:
 - Postmenopausal
 - Disabled
 - Children

Why does it work?

- ✚ Reduced anxiety due to the emotional bond
 - Soothing
 - Distracting

AROMATHERAPY

- ✚ One research indicated statistically significant reduction in anxiety scores
 - Questionnaire completed after 15 min
 - Patients exposed to candle warmers with essential oil diluted with water (1:1) were less anxious compared the candle warmer with just water

How does it work?

- ✚ Olfactory processing, the sense of smell, is associated with the limbic system.
 - This system includes the amygdale, which controls emotions.
- ✚ Lavender controls the activity of cyclic adenosine monophosphate (cAMP).
 - Reduced cAMP activity relates to sedation