

ASSISTANT: NEVER LEAVE PATIENTS ALONE

TIPS AND TRICKS

- Remember that **patients are uncomfortable in this stressful situation**. Not everyone is perfectly comfortable with dental offices, and for those who are not it is important we understand they aren't around the industry every day. It can be very nerve wracking and anxiety provoking.
- **Every appointment will be different**. While some patients may be so scared you have to stay with them for the duration of the appointment, many are very calm and at ease. For patients who are not nervous, they may not want you around the whole time, in which case you can get other things done during breaks and waiting periods.
- Stay within ear shot of the patient. This is important because if you do leave the operatory you never know what a patient is feeling, and how they are doing, so by staying within earshot of them you can **monitor them and ensure their safety and wellbeing**.
- You are responsible for the patient's well-being. While the patient is in the back of the office during their appointment **you are the one who is responsible for them**. Remember this and make sure you take the responsibility very seriously.
- A five-minute break for you may not seem like a long time, however, after a few minutes a **patient can begin to assume you forgot about them**. Remember that waiting alone in a different environment can cause five minutes to seem like 20.
- It can be beneficial if every week you pick a few recent stories to tell. **Having three or four funny stories can help when you do have a nervous patient**. It allows you to always have a good story on the front of your mind that will help the patient laugh or smile and begin to ease up.
- Communication is key. If you do have to leave the room **make sure that you tell the patient where you are going, what you are doing and a reasonable estimation for how long their break should be**. If you allow the patient to be included on what you are doing it can help them feel more in control and comfortable.
- Make sure your patient is comfortable. This will help you and your patient. If your patient comes in, very anxious and scared and you offer them some water, a movie and a blanket, suddenly their experience is already **better than they were expecting**.