

COSMETIC SURGERY



For the whole family

The American Dental Association (ADA) recommends that you visit your family dentist for a checkup a minimum of two times each year. Such checkups provide routine or deep cleanings to eliminate plaque buildup and prevent tooth decay.

If necessary, they also provide fluoride treatments to help coat the teeth, a procedure also important in the prevention of tooth decay. Preventative dental checkups can help with the detection of oral health problems long before the onset of symptoms.

Although modern day dental practice centres around prevention, many treatments or interventions are still needed. The majority of dental treatments are carried out to prevent or treat the two most common oral diseases which are dental caries (tooth decay) and periodontal disease (gum disease or pyorrhea).

Common treatments involve the restoration of teeth as a treatment for dental caries (fillings), extraction or surgical removal of teeth which cannot be restored, scaling of teeth to treat periodontal problems and endodontic root canal treatment to treat abscessed teeth.

Dentists need to take additional qualifications or training to carry out more complex treatments such as sedation, oral and maxillofacial surgery, and implants. Whilst the majority of oral diseases are unique and self limiting, some can indicate poor general health, tumours, blood dyscrasias and abnormalities including genetic problems.

Family dentistry, like general dentistry, provides services related to the general maintenance of oral hygiene and tooth health.

Is it for you?

Although family dentists are typically associated with preventative and restorative dentistry, many pursue additional training in order to provide cosmetic dentistry services such as teeth whitening and porcelain veneers. Family dentists who perform cosmetic procedures normally refer to themselves as family and cosmetic dentists.

Family and cosmetic dentists have more training than typical family dentists, though they occasionally refer some people to other dentists if specialized treatments are required. Specialists may include orthodontists (for teeth straightening), endodontists (for more complex root canal treatments), prosthodontists (for more complex crowns or for dental implants) and maxillofacial surgeons (for oral surgery). For very young children (ages four and younger), a family dentist may recommend a pediatric dentist, who has knowledge and training related to young children and early tooth health.

After earning an undergraduate degree and passing the Dental Admission Test (DAT), prospective family dentists must complete a three- to five-year dental school program that equips them with a general dentistry education.

Following dental school, the majority of dentists choose to move immediately into practice as a general or family dentist. Others, however, opt to pursue postgraduate training to become a specialty dentist. Nine specialty fields of dentistry are recognized by the American Dental Association.