Perfect Your Fibromyalgia Oral Health Plan

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Fibromyalgia and Your Oral Health Plan

A large portion of people dislike going to the dentist, but for people who live with fibromyalgia, dental appointments can be uncomfortable and even cause flare-ups that are exhausting and take days to recover from. In fact, many people with fibromyalgia find that recovering from the dental visit is the worst part of the ordeal. Let's talk about fibromyalgia oral health and how you can help avoid pain.

Make Your Home Oral Hygiene Routine Very Meticulous

A dedicated flossing routine will mean that there is less tartar buildup on your teeth, which equates to gentler dental cleanings. Using an electric toothbrush and water flosser can keep buildup to a minimum.

Find a Dentist Who Uses Lasers

Laser dentistry is expanding the way dentists complete routine procedures like fillings. If rough vibrations from drills set you off, your dentist may be able to complete the procedure with a laser instead. It also preserves more tooth enamel and keeps fillings less invasive than those prepped with a drill.

Consider Asking for Sedation, Anxiety Meds, or Muscle Relaxers

Sedation dentistry helps patients relax during their appointment. Dental patients with fibromyalgia often have hypersensitivity when getting local anesthesia, so being sedated helps that.

It also decreases your anxiety and helps you remain relaxed throughout the appointment. Relaxed muscles mean your body won't react as harshly.

If sedation isn't right for you, then a prescription muscle relaxer may help instead. Always be sure to discuss the local anesthetics used by your dentist, as most of them contain epinephrine and this is known to cause fibromyalgia pain in some people. Some epinephrine-free anesthetics are kept on hand.

Stay Comfortable, and Take Frequent Breaks

If you know you'll need to rest your jaw frequently throughout the procedure, or need to get up to move around, ask your dental provider to schedule your appointment accordingly with a little extra time. The extra time will help you find moments to relax your jaw, and reduce frustration for your dental team that is attempting to run on a schedule.

Your Occlusion (Bite) Can Affect More Than You Think

The way your teeth bite together (especially after procedures like crowns) can alter the muscle patterns around your mouth. Your dentist will check your occlusion, just note that minor adjustments could affect how someone with fibro feels afterward. Orthodontic realignment of the teeth is often an effective way to correct the symptoms of TMJ or muscle pain associated with misaligned teeth.

Make Sure It’s Not an Actual Toothache

One of the biggest mistakes you can make is ignoring dental pain because it’s creating referred pain that is interpreted as something related to fibromyalgia. What is a cavity today can turn out to be an abscessed tooth tomorrow.

Get routine dental care on a regular basis to keep dental health needs at a minimum, with interceptive care. Regular cleanings twice a year and comprehensive check-ups will allow cavities or fractures to be diagnosed as early as possible, before they can become more invasive and costly to treat.