

How to find an NHS dentist

To get NHS dental treatment, just contact a practice providing NHS dentistry and ask for an NHS appointment.

Whether you need urgent treatment or just a check-up, if you are having difficulty finding an NHS dentist you can call the 'dental access helpline' for the local primary care trust (PCT).

Where to find details of NHS dentists and PCT dental access helplines

- on **NHS Choices** at www.nhs.uk
- by texting '**dentist**' to '**64746**' or '**NHSGO**' from your mobile phone from the area where you need a dentist
- by calling **NHS Direct** on **0845 46 47**.

Urgent NHS dental treatment and care out of hours

If you think you might need urgent treatment contact your dentist on the usual number. If you do not have a regular dentist, you can always get urgent care or be treated out of hours if clinically necessary. If you already have details of your local urgent dental service, call them. If not, call the local PCT's dental access helpline.

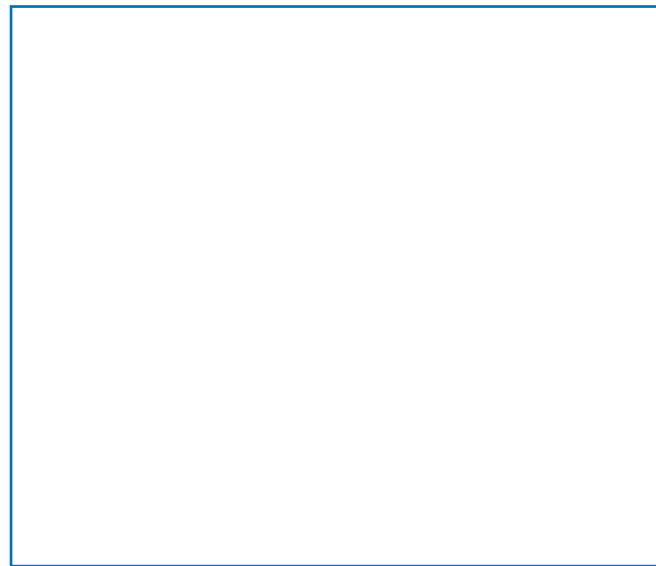
How often should I expect to see the dentist for a routine check-up?

Visiting your dentist is important. The interval between check-ups will depend on how healthy your mouth, teeth and gums are at different times of your life. This will alter with changes in your general health or lifestyle, and your risk of future problems. If you have problems with your mouth or teeth between planned check-ups, ask your dentist for an earlier appointment.

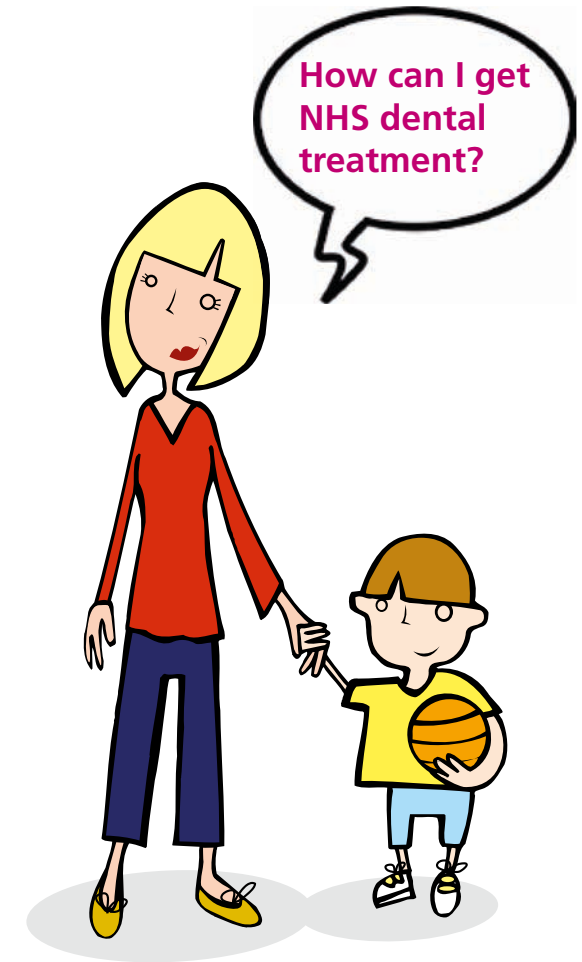
What treatments should I expect to be provided under the NHS?

You will be able to have **all treatment provided under the NHS that your dentist feels is clinically necessary** in order to keep your teeth, gums and mouth healthy. If your dentist says that you need a particular type of treatment, you should not be asked to pay for it privately.

If you are moving to live in another area of the country soon you may want to wait until you arrive in the new area before starting treatment. If you are unable to complete a course of treatment which has already been started before you move, speak to your dentist. The PCT responsible for your new area will help you find another NHS dentist if you are having difficulty.



NHS dental services in England



The NHS is committed to providing NHS dentistry for anyone who seeks help in accessing services.

NHS dental charges from 1 April 2009

The charge you pay depends on the treatment you need to keep your mouth, gums and teeth healthy. You will only ever be asked to pay one charge for each complete course of treatment, even if you need to visit your dentist more than once to finish it – either Band 1, Band 2 or Band 3 (see blue box). If you have to be referred to another dentist for another course of treatment you can expect a second charge. Some minor treatments are free.

Free NHS dental treatment or help with health costs

You do not have to pay for NHS dental treatment if, when the treatment starts, you are:

- aged under 18
- under 19 and receiving full-time education
- pregnant or a mother who has had a baby in the previous 12 months
- staying in an NHS hospital and your treatment is carried out by the hospital dentist
- an NHS Hospital Dental Service outpatient (however, you may have to pay for your dentures or bridges).

You also do not have to pay if, when the treatment starts, or when you are asked to pay:

- you are included in an award of
 - Income Support
 - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
 - Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
 - Pension Credit guarantee credit
- or
- you are named on a valid NHS tax credit exemption certificate, or you are entitled to an NHS tax credit exemption certificate
 - you are named on a valid HC2 certificate.

You will not be exempt from paying because you receive Incapacity Benefit, contribution-based Employment and Support Allowance, contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Disability Living Allowance, Council Tax Benefit, Housing Benefit, or Pension Credit savings credit, when paid on their own. Medical conditions do not exempt patients from payment for dental treatment.

You will be asked to show your dentist written proof that you can claim, free, all or part of your NHS treatment. You will also be asked to sign a form to confirm that you do not have to pay. If your name is on a valid HC3 certificate, you may not have to pay for all your treatment. Checks are made on free and reduced cost treatment claims. If you say you have the right to free treatment when you do not, you may incur a penalty charge.

For advice on help with health costs **call 0845 850 1166** or see 'Help with health costs' (HC11), available from Jobcentre Plus offices, NHS dentists, or from <http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk>

If you are not exempt from charges, you should pay one of the following charges for each course of treatment you receive:

Band 1 course of treatment – £16.50

This covers an examination, diagnosis (e.g. X-rays), advice on how to prevent future problems, a scale and polish if needed and application of fluoride varnish or fissure sealants. If you require urgent care, even if your urgent treatment needs more than one appointment to complete, you will only need to pay one Band 1 charge.

Band 2 course of treatment – £45.60

This covers everything listed in Band 1 above, plus any further treatment such as fillings, root canal work or if your dentist needs to take out one or more of your teeth.

Band 3 course of treatment – £198.00

This covers everything listed in Bands 1 and 2 above, plus crowns, dentures or bridges.



For further information on NHS dental services and dental charges see the more detailed 'Guide to NHS dental services in England' which is available from www.dh.gov.uk/dentistry, or ask your dentist or PCT for help.