

TEAM TRAINING

BACK OFFICE TERMINOLOGY & DEFINITIONS

Periodontist: A specialty dentist who's focus is on the structures surrounding the teeth as well as gums. Periodontists are primarily concerned with the prevention, diagnosis and treatment regarding diseases that affect those structures. An example of such disease would be periodontitis (an advanced case of gum disease). While being trained to be a general dentist they went on to complete extra studies to become a periodontist.

Prosthodontist: A specialty dentist who works with the artificial replacements within the mouth; such as the manufacturing, design and placement of such artificial replacements. An example of this could be an implant. Same situation as above, they went on to become a specialized dentist.

Prosthetic cases: As relating to the definition above, this would be one or more artificially made devices which are used to look like and preform the same as a natural tooth.

Same day smiles: A term referring to being able to come into the office with tooth/teeth that you are scheduled to change (crown, implant crown, etc.) and be able to leave the same day with a finished product. A large group of different technologies must work together so that the doctor can produce this product from his own office, in one day. These technologies include, but are not limited to: 3-D scans, in office mills, CAD-CAM technology, etc.

Prophy: Short for 'dental prophylaxis', a dental prophy is done by a Registered Dental Hygienist and is the cleaning and polishing of teeth, typically done every six months, however, can be altered by the hygienist's discretion.

Gum disease: The inflammation of the gums and an over average amount of bone being lost around tooth. Gum disease starts small but can get to the point of residing gums and eventual tooth loss. This can happen for many reasons some of the may include, plaque building up, bacteria etc. This disease can be reversed if caught soon enough.

Active infection: An infection that is currently progressing and getting worse with nothing stopping or slowing it.

Root canal: A dental procedure used to save a tooth once the decay has gotten to bad and reached the root; at this point the dentist must remove the inside of the root, and then fill it with a protective material.

Extraction: When a tooth must be fully taken out due to a multitude of reasons, some of which are tooth decay, gum disease, traumatic fracture and infection.

Treatment plans: A scheduled, step by step plan, with details about what, when and how the Dr. recommends fixing the tooth/teeth.

Supervised neglect: When the dentist allows the patient to not get needed treatment.

Non-restorable tooth: A tooth in which the doctor decides it cannot be saved no matter what method tried and its time within the mouth is limited.

Incipient lesion: Tooth enamel when it first starts to decay, before it is a full-blown cavity.

Recall: When an already established patient comes back for their cleaning appointment.

Elective treatment: Dental treatment that is not necessary for the patients' health. Something that the patients can choose if they want, some examples of this are: Invisalign, veneers, whitening etc.

Invisalign: A brand of clear teeth aligners that essentially work like braces however you can take on and off and there are sets that are continuously updated with the newly adjusted teeth.

Veneers: A type of elective treatment where you can 'reface' your front (anterior) teeth with a strong tooth like material that is cemented to the original tooth.

General dentist: Your overall dental healthcare provider, this dentist manages your overall oral health as well as provides you with overall dental health procedures that include but are not limited to, crowns, veneers, fillings, root canals and bridges. Generally, to become a general dentist you must complete three or more years of undergraduate schooling and four years of dental school. All general dentists have either DDS or a DMD.

Radiographs: A picture created with a piece of sensitive film and some sort of radiation. Often used in medical fields for examination. Also known as an X-Ray.

PA: A type of dental X-Ray known as a periapical, a periapical is a single X-Ray that shows the area of concern, and the X-Ray must contain all of the tooth to be considered a perfect PA.

Irreversible dentistry: Dentistry that cannot be undone, an example of this could be a filling or a crown.