

---

# How to Choose Your Dentist

Hema Patel DDS

[www.smileplusdentistry.com](http://www.smileplusdentistry.com)



---

Annie and Daddy Warbucks sang, "You're never fully dressed without a smile." Indeed, a beautiful smile has a positive impact your health as well as your appearance. That's why it's important to use care when choosing a dentist.

Before going for a visit, do your homework. Ask friends, family, neighbors or colleagues for recommendations. Your family physician or local pharmacist may also make referrals. If you're moving, ask your current dentist to make a suggestion. You can also go online to search the American Dental Association's Web site or contact your local or state dental society to find a dentist in your area.

Some of the following is taken from a publicly available brochure called "How to be a wise dental consumer" published by the ADA. Some of the information has been edited to bring it up-to-date.

Consumers want to know how to spend their money wisely, and they want assurances about the quality of dental care they receive. Because dental care is a highly personalized health service that must vary from patient to patient, it is difficult to give hard-and-fast rules about what is "good" dentistry. The following offers some broad but useful guidelines for the consumer.

For successful dental care it is important to have a family dentist who takes a sincere interest in the patient's general health. It makes sense to select and become acquainted with a dentist before a dental emergency arises. If you are a subscriber to one of the newer dental benefit modalities such as dental HMO's and capitation plans you will be limited in the number of dentists from which to choose in any given area. Nonetheless the following can still provide useful guidelines in the selection process.

State Board licensed dentists in general practice are fully qualified to provide nearly all aspects of dental care. They can also provide referrals in cases where specialized treatment is required. Specialty areas in dentistry include:

- Endodontics -- root canal therapy
- Oral Surgery/Oral Pathology -- the identification and removal of teeth or tissues from the oral cavity.
- Orthodontics -- braces and the repositioning of teeth.
- Pedodontics -- care exclusively for children and teens.
- Periodontics -- care of gums and supporting tissues.
- Prosthodontics -- dentists specially trained for full mouth rehabilitation.

The past many years has seen the rise of advertising for dental services. Some of these advertising programs can be useful in the selection process. For example, even though many dental referral services (such as 1 800 DENTIST in California) are directly subsidized by the participating dentists, the consumer can obtain a large amount of information about the individual dentists on the service. Other modalities, such as Yellow Page, local newspaper, radio, television, and direct mail ads can be of some help. Please be advised that in most states it is considered unethical or unprofessional for any dentist to advertise that his/her treatment is "superior" to another.

After completing your research, call a dentist for an appointment. At your first visit you should be able to learn a lot about whether the dentist is right for you and your family. Keep in mind the following questions:

- What is the general appearance of the office, the dentist, and the staff? Is everything neat, clean, and orderly? Keep in mind that every dental office must abide by the current OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) guidelines for sterilization and disinfection.
- How available is the dentist? Is the appointment schedule convenient for you? Is the office easy to get to from your home or place of business?
- Does the office provide dental health instruction and education? You will want a dentist who is skilled both in the treatment and prevention of dental disorders.
- Does the dentist seem genuinely interested in your health? Your medical and dental history should be recorded and placed in a permanent file to assist in the evaluation of your future dental health needs.
- What arrangements does the dentist have for handling emergencies that occur outside of office hours? Does the dentist have an answering service or paging service? You will find that most dentists arrange for a colleague or a referral source to aid their patients when they themselves will be unavailable.
- Don't be embarrassed to ask the staff about fees. The dentist and his/her staff should be willing to discuss fees and/or financial arrangements in advance of treatment.

By spending the small amount of time necessary to make an intelligent choice of a dentist, you will help create a doctor-patient relationship founded on mutual trust and respect.

We know choosing a dentist can be a difficult task. This information for our office is given to help you choose a dentist that's right for you.

Our dental office was created so you can experience friendly, gentle Dentistry that produces proven results – a great smile and healthy teeth for life.

These five questions are the key questions you must ask to discover the dental practice that's right for you. We at Dr. Hema Patel's office have uncovered these key questions through months of research and our patients' opinion.

1. How do I know I'll like my experience if I come to your office?
2. How do I know you are a good Dentist?
3. Will you take time to explain what dental problems I have and offer suggestions for best treatment choice?
4. Do you make appointment scheduling, fees, billing, and insurance easy for me?
5. The fifth and most important question is: How are you going to help me keep my teeth for a lifetime so they look good and feel good? Or, for those who have lost some of or all of their teeth the fifth and most important question becomes: How are you going to help me regain lost appearance and function?

### **Question 1: How do I know I'll like my experience if I come to your office?**

At Dr. Hema Patel's office, you'll notice a difference the moment you step into our friendly and modern facility, designed for your comfort.

Honestly though, a far more important aspect of our unique dental practice is our staff. They are "people" people who enjoy giving great service.

Many of our patients have remarked to us what a friendly, upbeat office we have. We take personal pride in being an office that our patients like to come to.

If you haven't been to a dentist in a long while, you can be assured of not being embarrassed or scolded.

Listen, we know it can be hard to come in even though you know you should. We won't make it any harder. We work to make it easier, so you can feel relieved about that!

We work with you individually to help you get the right kind of dental care that looks good, feels good, and helps keep your teeth for a lifetime.

You'll benefit from the latest technology available in equipment, materials, and technologies so you cannot only have great dental health, but also a great smile. You'll enjoy a friendly atmosphere of open communication.

We answer your questions, and work to understand your concerns.

### **Question 2: How do I know you are a good Dentist?**

Good dentistry comes as a result of the combination of education... on-going professional post-doctoral training...talent... experience...and the commitment to doing it right.

Dr. Hema Patel Has earned her Doctors in dental surgery (DDS) from New York University and has been practicing dentistry for seven years. She has earned her bachelor in dental sciences (BDS) from Gujarat University in India. Dr. Patel has received restorative honors at New York University and also received training on restoring Implants. Dr. Patel has been constantly receiving extensive post-doctoral training to ensure you get the most advanced technologies available.

Dr. Hema Patel is a proud member of American Dental Association, California Dental Association, Southern Alameda County Dental Society, Indian Dental Association and Fremont Chamber of Commerce.

You'll enjoy a friendly, caring chairside manner from the doctor. They pay attention to the details that ensure your care is as thorough and gentle as possible.

If you have a challenging dental situation, you'll like what we can do for you. Why? Because we'll employ all of our wide-ranging diagnostic and treatment methods to figure out what works best for your situation.

### **Question 3: Do you offer most of the Dental services that I need or could need?**

The short answer is "yes".

We offer most of the dental services that you'll need right here in our office. We also work with some of the best specialists in Fremont area for more challenging problems.

As a full service dental practice, Dr. Hema Patel can help you with all the routine services you would expect, along with the ones that you don't commonly see in most dental offices.

Among the routine services we offer are examinations, cleanings, check-ups, conservative gum treatment, fillings, root canals, crowns, bridges, removable partial dentures, and full dentures.

Among the not commonly seen services are:

- **Cosmetic Dentistry Services**- Smile makeovers to create smile design that gives you the look you've always wanted.
- **Power Whitening** to give you white, bright teeth in about an hour.
- **Super-Strong tooth-colored materials** so teeth don't look gray or dark at the gum line... giving natural looking teeth.
- **Full cosmetic consultation** for challenging, difficult situations, restoring smiling and chewing to how they should be.
- **Bad Breath** Evaluation and Treatment
- **Dental Implant Therapy**- Replacing missing teeth and rebuilding smiles.
- **Soft tissue management** – A nonsurgical approach to a gum disease, which includes Gum Therapy with personalized homecare regimen and instruments, specialized antibiotics to treat resistant gum disease and maintenance program to follow up.
- **Intra-oral cameras**- so you can see what we see when we look into your mouth.
- **Interactive Patient Education System**- to help you understand what exactly we mean when we diagnose a problem

#### **Question 4: Do you make appointment scheduling, fees, billing, and insurance easy for me?**

Absolutely! At Dr. Patel's office, we recognize the importance of being able to get appointments and having a flexible schedule.

We help you understand the fees, billing and insurance so you can be comfortable financially, too. We work to make fees affordable while helping maximize your insurance coverage. We also offer flexible payment plans and interest free financing for your dental needs.

We deal with number of plans and file for you helping you win in dealing with insurance companies. Dental insurance, while not a pay-all, can be a real help in paying for maintenance dental care.

Our staff is ready to help you so that your total dental experience is the same we'd want for ourselves.

#### **The fifth and most important question is:**

How are you going to help me keep my teeth for a lifetime so they look good and feel good? Or For those who have lost some of or all of their teeth the fifth and most important question becomes:

How are you going to help me regain lost appearance and function?

First, we'll talk with you about your past medical history and dental history.

We want to know your concerns and what is important to you about your teeth and your treatment.

We'll evaluate your teeth, gums and bite, looking for hidden signs of problems that don't hurt until it's too late.

We'll offer you the kind of dentistry that we would want for our own families. We'll help you get the bright, white smile you've always wanted.

We'll answer your questions and work out the needed appointments to give you the best results as quickly as possible while maintaining quality care.

Now that we know that serious, life-threatening risks to your health can be a result of untreated dental problems, we'll help rid you of your dental infection-and help it stay that way.

You will receive an individual, customized plan of treatment that serves four functions:

1. Correcting your problems
2. Enhancing your appearance
3. Creating long term solutions
4. Preventing future problems by giving you maintainable dental health

Once your treatment (if any) is complete, we'll help you maintain your dental health with periodic visits on a schedule designed for you as an individual.

Dentistry is a lifetime need. Teeth don't heal themselves. If they did, no one would lose any teeth.

Every age has it's own special dental problems. As you live longer and work later in your life, your dental needs are unique. We help you regain lost function, eliminate painful conditions, and enjoy a youthful, radiant smile.

### In Closing

We know we are right for those who want to keep their teeth for a lifetime. We are right for those who want teeth that look good and feel good. We are right for the person who wants a bright, white smile. If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, then you should be a patient in our practice.

As our gift to you, you will receive your free initial clinical examination that includes a comprehensive examination of your teeth, an oral cancer screening, jaw joint health review, gum and bone disease exam, review of your medical and dental history and a cosmetic screening. This does not include x-rays or other records.

Thank you for calling in and requesting this report, to schedule an appointment or for more information call our office at 510-796-1656.

Our website, [www.smileplusdentistry.com](http://www.smileplusdentistry.com) has also plenty of important information.