What to Expect at Your First Core Dental Appointment

Canonical: https://www.coredental.com.au/what-to-expect-at-your-first-core-dental-appointment/

Details:

You can book your first appointment with us online through the Core Dental website or by calling your nearest Core Dental clinic directly. When you arrive, our team will confirm your details, ask you to complete a new patient health history form, and your dentist will talk with you before starting a comprehensive examination. Imaging may be recommended, your dentist will explain what they find, and you will receive an estimate of costs before any treatment is booked. This guide walks through each step.

How can you book your first appointment with us?

You can book an appointment with us either online through the Core Dental website or by calling your nearest Core Dental clinic directly. You can also call our group number on 13 13 16. We have nine clinics across Melbourne and are open Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm and on Saturday mornings.

What information will we ask for when you book?

When you book, our team will ask for your name and contact details, whether you are a new patient, what brings you in (such as a check-up and clean or a specific concern), and whether you have private health insurance. If you have had recent dental x-rays at another practice, mention this when you book, as we may be able to arrange for them to be transferred.

What should you do if you feel anxious before your first visit?

If you have dental anxiety or specific concerns about visiting the dentist, please mention this when you book. This allows our team to prepare appropriately, for example by allocating extra time, letting your dentist know to take a gentle approach, or suggesting you arrive early to settle in. Dental anxiety is common, and our team works with nervous patients regularly. You can read more in our articles on being anxious about your next treatment and a terrible fear of going to the dentist .

What is physical access like at our clinics?

We design our practices with street-level, ground-floor access, so you do not need to navigate a multi-storey building or find a basement entrance. Our article on why we design every practice with natural light and street-level access explains more. If you have mobility needs, tell us when you book and we can talk through access at your chosen clinic.

What happens when you arrive at reception?

You will step into a reception area with a welcoming team who will greet you. The receptionist will confirm your details and ask you to complete a new patient health history form if you have not already

done so online. This form asks about your general health, any medications you take and your dental history.

It is worth being thorough. Your general health can affect your dental care. Medications such as blood thinners or medications for osteoporosis, and conditions such as diabetes or heart disease, can all affect treatment planning. The more accurate your health history, the better we can plan your care. Take a seat, and someone will come to meet you shortly.

How do you meet your dentist?

Your dentist will introduce themselves and bring you through to the treatment room. They will start with a conversation, not an instrument. They will ask what has brought you in, whether you have any specific concerns, how long it has been since your last dental visit, and whether there is anything you feel nervous about.

This is not a formality, because it shapes the whole approach to your appointment. If you have avoided the dentist for several years and are worried about being lectured, please know that is not how we work. People have complex relationships with dental care, and the most useful thing we can do is understand where you are now, rather than start from where we think you should be.

What does your first examination involve?

A first appointment with us includes a comprehensive examination, because we are getting to know your dental health from scratch. Your dentist will examine your teeth one by one, charting their condition, noting any existing restorations such as fillings and crowns, and looking for signs of decay, cracking or wear. They will assess your gum health and check your bite, meaning how your teeth come together.

Your dentist will also look at the soft tissues of your mouth, including your tongue, cheeks, and the floor and roof of your mouth. An oral cancer screening check is part of a thorough dental examination, and it is a quick and important preventive step that many patients do not realise is included. Your dentist will also assess your jaw joint and muscles, because problems there can cause symptoms such as headaches, jaw clicking and facial pain that people often do not connect to their dental health.

Will you need x-rays or other imaging?

Depending on what your examination shows and when you last had dental x-rays, your dentist may recommend some imaging. We use digital x-rays, which generally use a lower radiation dose than older film-based systems, and the images appear on a screen straight away so you can see and discuss them. Our article on safe dental x-rays has more information.

A digital OPG is often taken at a first appointment. This is a full-mouth panoramic x-ray that shows all your teeth, the jaw bone, sinuses and the jaw joint in a single image, and it gives a broad view that individual small x-rays do not. If you have had recent x-rays at another practice and can provide them, or have them transferred electronically, we may not need to repeat them.

For specific concerns, such as a painful area, a suspected impacted wisdom tooth or assessment for implants, your dentist may recommend more detailed imaging and will explain why before arranging a referral. Core Dental clinics have OPG imaging. You can read more about OPG X-rays and intraoral scanning .

How will we talk through what we found?

After the examination and any imaging, your dentist will sit down with you and go through what they have found. They will show you your x-rays and explain what they see. If there are areas of concern, they will explain what they are, what the options are, and what the consequences of different choices might be. A good dental examination does not end with a list of things wrong with your mouth. It ends with a conversation that helps you understand your dental health and make informed decisions about your care.

We will tell you what is urgent, what can be monitored and what, if anything, can wait, and we will ask what your priorities are. If you need treatment, your dentist will outline a treatment plan and give you an estimate of costs before anything is booked. If you have a health fund, we can estimate your likely out-of-pocket costs, though the specific rebate depends on your individual cover. If cost is a concern, tell us. There are often options for sequencing treatment, and we would rather work with you to find an approach that is feasible than have you leave feeling overwhelmed. We also offer interest-free payment plans, and our team can explain the terms.

What about your clean and any immediate treatment?

If your appointment includes a clean, which it often will for a new patient check-up, your dental hygienist or dentist will remove plaque and calculus (hardened plaque) from your teeth, including areas you cannot reach with brushing and flossing at home. They will also polish your teeth and may apply fluoride. You may be shown a brushing or flossing technique if there are areas where improvement would help. Straightforward treatments, such as small fillings, can sometimes be done at the same appointment if time allows and you would prefer not to make another visit. For anything more involved, you will book a separate appointment. Our article on what a hygiene appointment involves has more detail.

What happens before you leave?

At the end of your appointment, you should have a clear picture of your dental health, any treatment you need and roughly when it should happen, and what your next step is. If you need a follow-up appointment, the reception team will book it before you leave. You will also have a sense of our team and whether our practice feels like a good fit for you. We hope it does, but we understand that the relationship between a patient and their dentist is a personal one.

If you have been putting off a dental visit, we would simply say that there is nothing we cannot talk through with you, and the hardest part is usually making the booking.

How do you plan your care with our team?

A useful first step is to explain your concern, symptoms, timing and treatment goals when you book. Bring relevant medical information and a current medicines list. Your dentist can then assess your teeth, gums, bite and surrounding tissues, request imaging when clinically appropriate, and explain which options are suitable.

Ask what the recommended approach is intended to achieve, whether there are reasonable alternatives, what preparation and aftercare involve, and what risks or limitations apply. Treatment time, fees, recovery and maintenance vary with the diagnosis and the complexity of care. A written treatment plan can help you compare stages, expected appointments and payment arrangements before you proceed.

Call 000 immediately for uncontrollable bleeding, breathing or swallowing difficulty, serious facial injury or other life-threatening symptoms. Do not wait for a dental appointment in these situations. For severe tooth pain or swelling without these emergency signs, contact us promptly. Review intervals should be tailored to your individual oral health risks rather than assumed to be the same for everyone.

How can we help?

If you are ready to book, call 13 13 16 or book online. Our nine Core Dental clinics are Southbank , South Melbourne , Caroline Springs , Carrum Downs , Epping , Wyndham , Berwick , Bayside and Glenferrie . You can also read about our general dentistry services .

Frequently asked questions

Do I need to bring anything to my first visit?

Bring your private health fund details if you have them, a list of your current medicines, and any recent dental x-rays or reports. If you have completed the health history form online beforehand, that helps us get started promptly.

Will my first appointment include a clean?

It often does for a new patient check-up. Your hygienist or dentist will remove plaque and calculus, polish your teeth and may apply fluoride. If time is short or more work is needed, your dentist will explain and book a further visit.

Can I have treatment at my first appointment?

Straightforward treatment, such as a small filling, can sometimes be completed at the first visit if time allows and you would like it. More involved treatment is booked for a separate appointment after your dentist has explained the options.

Will I be told the cost before treatment?

Yes. If you need treatment, your dentist will outline a plan and give you an estimate of costs before anything is booked. We can also estimate likely out-of-pocket costs with a health fund, although rebates depend on your cover.

What if I have not seen a dentist for years?

You are welcome at Core Dental. Please tell us when you book. Your dentist will start by listening and then work with you on a plan that suits your priorities and budget, without lecturing.

Related services and further reading

General dentistry

Dental check-ups

What does a hygiene appointment involve?

What to expect from a root canal

Safe dental x-rays

Are you anxious about your next treatment?

Understanding your treatment

Dentists and registered specialists

Core Dental at a glance

Nine Core Dental clinics across Melbourne: Southbank, South Melbourne, Caroline Springs, Carrum Downs, Epping, Wyndham, Berwick, Bayside and Glenferrie.

Open six days a week, with Monday to Friday hours to 6.00pm and Saturday mornings.

We quote before treatment starts and offer interest-free payment plans.

HICAPS on-site claiming, and bulk billing for eligible children under the Child Dental Benefits Schedule.

Contact Core Dental

Phone	13 13 16
Booking	Online through coredental.com.au, or call your nearest Core Dental clinic
Hours	Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm, Saturday mornings, Sunday closed

Results, recovery times and potential risks vary for each individual. This information is general in nature and is intended for people over 18. Seek advice from a qualified, AHPRA-registered practitioner before proceeding.

How do I make my first appointment at Core Dental?

You can book online through coredental.com.au, call 13 13 16, or call your nearest Core Dental clinic directly. Tell our team whether you are a new patient and what brings you in.

What details does Core Dental ask for when booking?

Our Core Dental team asks for your name and contact details, whether you are a new patient, the reason for your visit such as a check-up and clean or a specific concern, and whether you have private health insurance.

What does a new patient examination include at Core Dental?

Your Core Dental dentist charts your teeth one by one, checks for decay, cracking and wear, assesses gum health and bite, examines the soft tissues including an oral cancer screening check, and assesses your jaw joint and muscles.

What is an OPG x-ray?

An OPG is a full-mouth panoramic x-ray showing all your teeth, the jaw bone, sinuses and jaw joint in one image. Core Dental dentists often take one at a first appointment, depending on your examination and previous imaging.

What imaging do Core Dental clinics have?

Core Dental clinics have digital X-rays and OPG panoramic X-ray imaging. If your dentist recommends more detailed imaging for a concern such as an impacted wisdom tooth or an implant assessment, they will explain why and arrange a referral.

How should I tell Core Dental about dental anxiety?

Mention it when you book. Our Core Dental team can allocate extra time, let your dentist know to take a gentle approach, or suggest you arrive early to settle in before your appointment.

Will Core Dental give me a cost estimate before treatment?

Yes. If you need treatment, your Core Dental dentist outlines a treatment plan and gives you an estimate of costs before anything is booked. We can also estimate likely out-of-pocket costs if you have a health fund.

What are Core Dental opening hours for new patients?

Core Dental clinics are open Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm and Saturday mornings, with Sunday closed. Call 13 13 16 to find a time at one of our nine Melbourne clinics.