

DENTAL PATIENT BILL OF RIGHTS

Your dentist is the best source of information about your dental health and wants you to feel comfortable about your dental care. You have the right to ask questions. As an informed dental patient, you also have these important rights:

You have a right . . .

- To know in advance the type of treatment that will be provided and the expected cost of treatment.
- To expect dental team members to use appropriate infection controls.
- To be informed about treatment alternatives and to be told in easily understood language about the advantages and disadvantages of each.
- To accept, defer, or decline any part of your treatment recommendations.
- To know the education and training of your dentist and dental team members.
- To know what professional rules, laws, and ethics apply to your dentist and dental team.
- To receive considerate and respectful treatment.
- To receive reasonable emergency care from your dentist.
- To mediate disputes about your treatment with an impartial mediator.
- To choose your own dentist.

You, in turn, have a responsibility

- To ask questions if you are uncertain about your dental treatment
- To keep your scheduled appointments
- To be available for treatment upon reasonable notice
- To adhere to regular home oral health routines.

From the Minnesota Dental Association, 1996

(over)

IF YOU HAVE A DISPUTE OR CONCERN, WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

Just like any other dispute in life, you should FIRST talk to the person with whom you have the problem! It is common sense and common courtesy. Respectfully and accurately, state what happened and how it made you feel, then give the dental healthcare professional a chance to respond rather than make some sort of demand. This is not the time to vent anger. More often than not, you will be satisfied with the response because dental healthcare professionals want to have happy and satisfied patients.

If by chance this approach does not work, then call the Minnesota Dental Association (651-646-7454) for information on how to contact the local district dental society's "peer review" committee which exists solely to help mediate disputes between dentists and patients.

If this approach does not work, then call the Minnesota Board of Dentistry (612-617-2250) and ask to speak to a complaint specialist. This is the state regulatory agency that licenses dental healthcare professionals. Be aware, this agency does not deal with monetary issues, only substandard care and unprofessional behavior. I deem this a last resort unless the issue is egregious or involves serious harm to the patient. For more information on how the Board of Dentistry serves the public, visit its web site at www.dentalboard.state.mn.us

Ronald L. King, DDS Giang T. Pham, DDS 6100 Excelsior Blvd, Suite East St. Louis Park, MN 55416

Phone: 952-929-4545 e-mail: kingtooth@live.com Web site: www.kingtooth.com