



# Ask Dr. Grant



DR GRANT IS ONE OF THE LEADING COSMETIC DENTISTS IN THE SOUTH WEST AND HAS TREATED PATIENTS FROM ACROSS THE REGION AND BEYOND. HIS MAIN SOURCE OF NEW PATIENTS IS THROUGH WORD-OF-MOUTH REFERRALS

## Dental anxiety – what’s the story?

### What are we talking about?

Fear of going to the dentist, for whatever reason. For many people, a trip to see the dentist is hardly the highlight of the calendar, stemming from any number of things: bad childhood experiences, worries it'll hurt or simply assuming the worst because you haven't visited for so long. Because many of us only go when we have toothache or a problem, we often associate it with pain or something bad.

### So, what's the good news?

The good news is that things have changed a lot in recent years. Dentistry today benefits from a host of technical advances, meaning it is now possible to carry out dental treatments with minimal discomfort, if not pain free. In fact, one of the things I find patients who haven't been for a check-up for a while are often most surprised to learn is that injections don't have to hurt and you no longer have to suffer in silence.

### How can a dentist help me feel more calm?

There are lots of things that can help patients feel more calm, including hypnosis – I, for example, am trained in medical and dental hypnosis techniques – relaxation techniques and music. I find

these are especially popular with patients who don't wish to be sedated, which is of course another option. It's also about feeling in control – if a patient knows they can sit up when they like and control what they have done, the fear usually goes away.

### What's your advice?

Prevention truly is better than cure. Problems won't just magically go away or fix themselves and putting off coming to see us will only make you worry more. By going for regular check-ups, any problems can be sorted early on, meaning less damage, less worry and – more to the point – less cost. There are lots of ways we can help – not just through treatments, but by giving you tips and advice on oral hygiene and looking after your teeth and gums.

### I fear my teeth are beyond repair

There's no such thing as a lost cause! There are now so many treatments

available, you'd be surprised: shade-matched cosmetic fillings can be carefully shaped to aesthetically restore worn-down teeth; veneers can restore rough or discoloured teeth; crowns or bridges can restore the shape and function of more damaged teeth. And there's now also a new option for replacing missing teeth – dental implants – where a tiny titanium screw acts like the missing tooth root and holds a crown or bridge.

### Any final thoughts?

In my experience, there's no substitute for listening: by understanding a patient's concerns and expectations, I can tailor a treatment plan to meet their own individual needs and move at a pace that's right for them. So, find a dentist you can trust and talk through any concerns – we're here to help! 

**“WISDOM IS  
NOTHING MORE  
THAN HEALED  
PAIN” – ROBERT  
GARY LEE**

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