

Frequently Asked Questions
Dental Hygiene Program

Patient Section

What dental services do you offer to patients at Coastal Carolina Community College?

For the most part, all procedures offered to patients in the dental hygiene clinic are preventive and diagnostic. We provide the following care to our patients:

- Intraoral and extraoral examinations including oral cancer screening
- Cleanings
- Application of fluoride and other topical medications
- X-rays (intraoral and panoramic)
- Sealants

Can I be guaranteed of getting an appointment when I want one?

I'm sorry to say, that may not always be possible. Our goal at Coastal Carolina Community College is to offer the best possible education for our students while providing the highest quality care for our patients. Students schedule their own patients based on semester quotas. Patients are classified according to difficulty level. As the student proceeds through the program, they need harder and harder patients. If you are a classification that students do not need for quota, you may have to wait several months for an appointment. If you need an appointment on a specific day or time, we suggest you visit your regular dentist.

Can my visits in the dental hygiene clinic replace the need for seeing my dentist?

No, absolutely not. Students and faculty are here to provide dental hygiene care ONLY. We do NOT diagnose or treat dental diseases. Any additional care you may require must be secured through a private dental practice. We urge you to maintain a regular schedule for check-ups with your dentist.

How long will it take me to have my teeth cleaned in the dental clinic?

The time varies by patient classification and the experience level of the student. Due to added paperwork and the process of checking our students' treatment, your appointment will take longer than in a private dental office. Also, it may be necessary for you to return for additional appointments in order to complete your treatment.

Cleaning appointments take a minimum of two hours. Usually more time is needed to complete treatment. If you do not have time to allow the student to complete your cleaning, please do not begin treatment. Students receive credit ONLY for those patients whose treatment they complete. If time is a problem, we suggest you seek treatment at a private dental office.

Can my children have their teeth cleaned in the clinic?

Our students do treat children on a limited basis. However, sometimes the waiting list is quite long for children.

I have daycare problems. My child is very well-behaved. Can I bring him/her with me to wait in the reception area while I have my teeth cleaned.

No, I'm sorry but that is against Coastal Carolina Community College policy. Children may not be left unattended in any area on campus. You need to make sure you have alternate care for your child on the day(s) of your appointment.

I need other dental care like fillings and extractions. Can I have that done in the dental clinic?

No, we only provide dental hygiene services in the dental clinic.

Can you recommend a good dentist for me to see?

We do not recommend specific dentists. Jacksonville has many well-qualified dentists. You can find them listed in the telephone book. We suggest you talk to friends and neighbors for recommendations.

How much does it cost to be seen in the dental clinic?

The cost for a dental cleaning is \$5 regardless of the number of visits you need. There is no charge for dental x-rays. Sealants are charged at \$5 per tooth.

I have dental insurance. Will you file it for me?

No, we do not file insurance.

Do you take Medicaid?

No, we do not accept any third party payments.

I have never been seen in the clinic before. How do I get an appointment?

Call the dental department secretary at 910-938-6270 to make an appointment for screening.

Where do I park when I arrive for my scheduled appointment in the dental clinic?

Turn into the campus off of Western Boulevard at the circular drive in front of the Administration Building – you will see the main campus sign and flags flying. On your right you will see a small parking lot. An entire row of spaces, closest to the Health Occupation/Science Building, has been reserved for visitors to our campus. You may park in any of those spots.

What happens at the screening appointment and how long will it take?

Your screening will take about ½ hour. A student will review your medical and dental history, monitor and record your vital signs, and determine the complexity of your dental hygiene needs. You teeth will NOT be cleaned at this time.

Do all patients have to be screened?

All new patients and patients who have not been seen in our clinic within one year must have a screening appointment prior to being scheduled.

After my screening, how do I get an appointment to have my teeth cleaned?

Following your screening, your name will be placed on a patient list. The students rely on this list when choosing patients to meet semester requirements. If you are selected as a patient, it will take one to five appointments depending upon your classification. If a student contacts you to make an appointment, be sure to write down the students name and telephone number in case you need to contact the student.

I had x-rays taken in the dental clinic. Is there any way to get a copy for my dentist?

All x-rays that are diagnostically acceptable will be sent to the dentist you noted on your radiography consent form. Please allow two weeks from the day the x-rays are taken to have them sent to your dentist.

Will you be able to tell me if I have a cavity after my teeth are cleaned and I have x-rays?

It is not legal for dental hygienists to diagnose disease. If we see areas that are suspicious, we will refer you to your dentist for diagnosis and treatment.

My schedule often changes. Is it a problem if I cancel an appointment?

It is extremely important for you to be present and on time for each appointment. Our students must complete a certain number of patients each semester. Your failure to keep a scheduled appointment could result in the student not graduating. All cancellations and failures will be noted on your patient record. Any patient who fails to keep two appointments without giving adequate notice will not be scheduled for further treatment in our clinic. You are expected to give at least 24 hours notice if you must cancel or reschedule an appointment.

I heard something about dental patients getting infectious diseases from their dentist. What do you do at Coastal to prevent disease transmission?

The Coastal Carolina Community College Dental Clinic meets or exceeds all standards of sterilization and infection control procedures. All instruments and supplies used in patients' mouths are either heat sterilized or are disposable. Each student must successfully complete a 32 hour course in Infection and Hazard Control before treating patients in the dental clinic.

If I know a dental hygiene student, can I make an appointment specifically with him/her?

Patients of record in the dental clinic are divided among the students. If your name is on a different student's list, the students can meet to discuss transferring you to the patient you would like to see. This can usually be accomplished, but is not guaranteed.

My teeth are sensitive. What causes that and what can I do?

There are several things that can cause sensitivity. If you are experiencing this problem, be sure to mention it to the student who cleans your teeth. After your examination, the student may be able to explain why your teeth are sensitive and provide you with methods for reducing sensitivity.

When I go to my dentist to have my teeth cleaned, he gives me local anesthesia because my teeth are so sensitive. Can you do that?

It is not legal in North Carolina for a dental hygienist to give local anesthesia. However, a licensed dentist is scheduled in most dental clinical sessions. The dentist will provide anesthesia services, when needed.

I have been told I have periodontal disease. Can I still get my teeth cleaned at Coastal?

Yes, you can. In fact, our students need students who require deep scalings so that they gain proficiency before graduation. As the student progresses in the curriculum, they need to treat more and more difficult dental problems. Patients with periodontal disease are most often treated by students in their second year.

My teeth are discolored. Do you provide any whitening procedures?

Our students sell Crest Professional Supreme Whitestrips for \$30 per box. These strips cannot be purchased from retail stores – only from your dental professional. We sell them at a price much lower than most dental offices. To purchase a box, just check with the dental secretary or any dental hygiene or assisting student.