

MANAGING APPOINTMENTS AND FAIL TO ATTEND POLICY

Managing appointments

To manage our appointment system effectively and provide high quality service, it is important that patients attend for their appointments as planned.

Our appointment system allows patients to access our service at a time that suits them and minimises waiting times. Appointments can be made or rescheduled by calling 020 8749 3371 or emailing info@oakwooddental.co.uk

If you have any queries or concerns about an appointment, please call the practice to speak to our team. With enough notice this means that if you need a shorter appointment time or do not want to go ahead with treatment, we are able to offer an appointment to someone else.

Reminders

Text reminders are sent the day before an appointment and patients are requested to inform the practice of any changes to their contact details.

Please note that text reminders are sent as a courtesy and texts may not be sent/received for reasons out of our control (IT failure/change in mobile number etc) Therefore failure to attend, by not receiving a text message, will not be considered a valid exception of our policy.

We will offer a paper appointment card to those that book face-to-face appointments.

If you are unable to keep your dental appointment, please call the practice giving us as much notice as possible – at least 1 working day – so that we can offer your time slot to another patient. If less notice is given without a valid reason, the appointment will be considered to have been broken and may incur a charge.

Rescheduling or delay of appointments by the Practice

We will only reschedule or delay a patient's appointment in unavoidable circumstances, in such cases we will:

- Contact the patient as soon as we are aware of the need to reschedule or delay and explain the reason why
- At the time of contact we will offer the earliest next available appointment
- If the patient is unable to commit to an appointment at that contact, then we will ask the patient to contact us and book a new appointment at the earliest convenience.

Cancellation of an appointment or a missed appointment by the patient

Failure to attend is defined as:

- Not arriving for a booked appointment
- Not giving enough notice of not being able to attend (Short Notice Cancellation)

We generally require 1 full working days' notice

- Not arriving for an appointment due to not receiving a text reminder

New Patients

Patient who are booked their first appointment with Oakwood Dental and fail to attend any NHS or Private appointments will not be booked any further appointments and will alternatively need to seek dental treatment elsewhere.

NHS Appointments

Although missed NHS appointments cannot be charged for, we have a very firm policy regarding non-attendance.

Patients who fail to attend two NHS dental appointments are unlikely to be offered any further appointments in line with NHS regulations (missed appointments do not have to be consecutive).

Your dentist can terminate your treatment if you miss your appointment without letting the dental surgery know. You may then need to pay again for a new course of treatment.

While surgeries cannot charge you for not turning up, NHS England has the right to ask you to find another dental surgery if you continue to miss appointments (what happens when you visit an NHS dentist, 2021) <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/dentists/what-happens-when-you-visit-the-dentist/>

If you miss an NHS appointment and do not attend again within 24 months, we may not be able to see you again. We may be able to place your name on our NHS waiting list to contact you when a place becomes available.

Private Treatments and Appointments

Patients who are booked a hygiene appointment will pay a £75 deposit fee. If a Hygienist appointment is cancelled by the patient at a short notice (less than one full working days' notice) or fail to attend, then this payment will be lost. A new fee will be payable upon booking a new appointment.

If a patient fails to attend a Private dental appointment with the dentist, they will be charged for some or all of the cost of that appointment, in proportion to the length of the appointment and any laboratory fees incurred. The final decision is at the discretion of the Practice owner. We reserve the right to ask for a deposit for private appointments with our dentist, which will be forfeited in the event of failure to attend as outlined above. If more than 2 appointments are missed, future appointments may not be offered as a result the patient will need to seek dental treatment elsewhere.

