

EP. 14 Tips for Incorporating Accelerated Hygiene in Your Practice.

What is accelerated hygiene and does it make sense to do this in your office?

When done correctly accelerated hygiene can be extremely profitable. Many hygienists are concerned that this means working at a faster pace or rushing patients through treatment. But with proper planning accelerated hygiene will open capacity for more same day opportunities, and your patients will feel that they received top-notch care.

For accelerated hygiene to work well, it is important to have two available operatories that are set up exactly the same and designated assistant. Create a checklist that covers every single thing that needs to be done by the assistant during each appointment. Headsets are also helpful in this setting.

Stagger appointments so that while the assistant is handling the diagnostics, medical history review, blood pressure, X-rays, etc. in one room, the hygienist is doing the scaling and polishing in the other. Then, the two will swap places so that the hygienist will scale and polish in the next room while the assistant wraps up the appointment of the first patient. The assistant will handoff to the doctor what was discovered and done in the appointment, schedule the next appointment, then turn-over the room to start the process over again.

Many dentists are concerned that patients won't see value in the appointment if two clinicians are seeing them during the appointment. The key is for the assistant to be highly trained, confident, able to engage the patient and able to handle the pace. Train the assistant well, create a checklist, and let her know exactly what is expected. Rather than being short-changed on the customer service experience, the patient still receives a high level of care and twice the customer service!

Why is assisted hygiene a good idea? Providers should be doing only what they are licensed to do. Utilizing assistants to do the other things will enable both the dentist and the hygienists to give more productive care. This allows the producers in the practice to be as effective as possible.

Start thinking: How can I make the best use of the providers' time in my practice? Accelerated Hygiene can be a great way to do this.