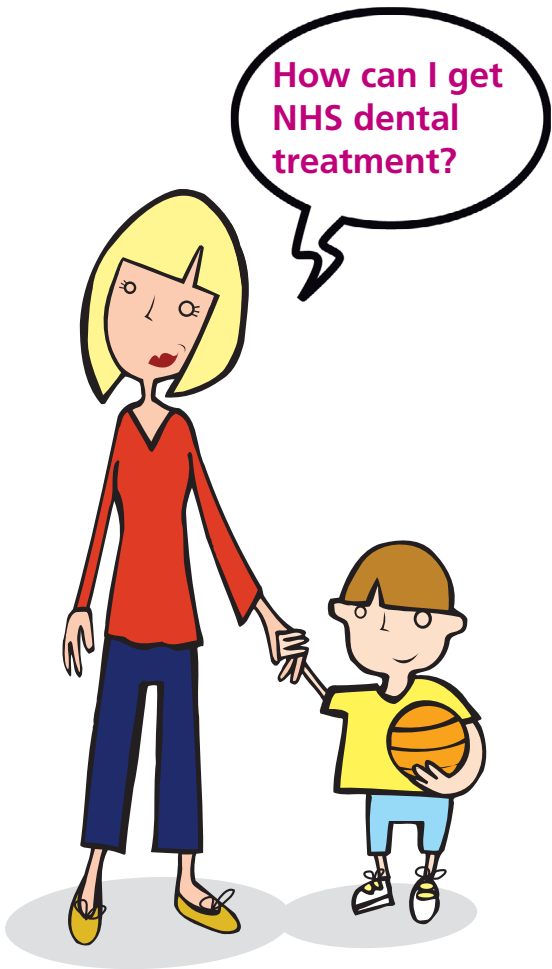


# NHS dental services in England



This leaflet explains how to find an NHS dentist, what treatment you can expect and how much it will cost from 1 April 2012.

# Free NHS dental treatment or help with health costs

**You do not have to pay for NHS dental treatment if, when the treatment starts, you are:**

- aged under 18
- under 19 and receiving full-time education
- pregnant or a mother who has had a baby in the previous 12 months
- staying in an NHS hospital and your treatment is carried out by the hospital dentist
- an NHS Hospital Dental Service outpatient (however, you may have to pay for your dentures or bridges).

**You also do not have to pay if, when the treatment starts, or when you are asked to pay:**

- you are included in an award of
  - Income Support
  - income-related Employment and Support Allowance
  - income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
  - Pension Credit guarantee credit

or

- you are named on a valid NHS tax credit exemption certificate, or you are entitled to an NHS tax credit exemption certificate
- you are named on a valid HC2 certificate

For further information on NHS dental services and dental charges, see the dental services section of the NHS Choices website ([www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)), or ask your dentist or primary care trust for help.

You will not be exempt from paying if you receive Incapacity Benefit, contribution-based Employment and Support Allowance, contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Disability Living Allowance, Council Tax Benefit, Housing Benefit or Pension Credit savings credit, when paid on their own. Medical conditions do not exempt patients from payment for dental treatment.

You will be asked to show your dentist written proof that you do not have to pay for all or part of your NHS treatment. You will also be asked to sign a form to confirm that you do not have to pay. If your name is on a valid HC3 certificate, you may not have to pay for all your treatment. Checks are made on free and reduced cost treatment claims. If you say you have the right to free treatment when you do not, you may incur a penalty charge.

### **What treatments should I expect to be provided under the NHS?**

You will be able to have all treatment provided under the NHS that your dentist feels is clinically necessary in order to keep your mouth, teeth and gums healthy. If your dentist says that you need a particular type of treatment, you should not be asked to pay for it privately.

If you are moving to live in another area of the country soon, you may want to wait until you arrive in the new area before starting treatment. If you are unable to complete a course of treatment that has already been started before you move, speak to your dentist. The primary care trust (PCT) responsible for your new area will help you to find another NHS dentist if you are having difficulty.

## NHS dental charges

The charge you pay depends on the treatment you need to keep your mouth, teeth and gums healthy. You will only ever be asked to pay one charge for each complete course of treatment, even if you need to visit your dentist more than once to finish it – either Band 1, Band 2 or Band 3 (see blue box). If you have to be referred to another dentist for another, separate course of treatment, you can expect a second charge. Some minor treatments are free.

**If you are not exempt from charges, you should pay one of the following charges for each course of treatment you receive:**

### **Band 1 course of treatment – £17.50**

This covers an examination, diagnosis (eg X rays), advice on how to prevent future problems, a scale and polish if needed, and application of fluoride varnish or fissure sealant. If you require urgent care, even if your urgent treatment needs more than one appointment to complete, you will only need to pay one Band 1 charge.

### **Band 2 course of treatment – £48.00**

This covers everything listed in Band 1 above, plus any further treatment such as fillings, root canal work or if your dentist needs to take out one or more of your teeth.

### **Band 3 course of treatment – £209.00**

This covers everything listed in Bands 1 and 2 above, plus crowns, dentures and bridges.

## How to find an NHS dentist

To get NHS dental treatment, just contact a practice providing NHS dentistry and ask for an NHS appointment.

Whether you need urgent treatment or just a check-up, if you are having difficulty finding an NHS dentist you can call the dental access helpline for the local PCT.

## Where to find details of NHS dentists and PCT dental access

- on **NHS Choices** at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)
- by texting **'dentist'** to **64746** or **'NHS GO'** from your mobile phone in the area where you need a dentist
- by calling **NHS Direct** on **0845 46 47**.

## How often should I go to the dentist?

You should see a dentist regularly for routine check-ups even if you are not experiencing any problems with your mouth or teeth. Attending regularly helps you and your dentist to keep your mouth, teeth and gums in good health and pain free. Your dentist will tell you how often you will need a routine check-up. The clinically recommended maximum intervals are up to 24 months for adults and up to 12 months for children. Within these guidelines, your dentist will recommend a recall interval for you based on his or her assessment of your current dental health.

For advice on help with health costs, call 0845 850 1166, or see *Help with health costs* (HC11), which is available from Jobcentre Plus offices and NHS dentists, or at [www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk) (enter HC11 in the search box).

## Dental appliances

Dental appliances, such as crowns and bridges, will usually be made by a dental laboratory, which must provide your dentist with a statement that they conform to European Union standard. If you would like a copy of this statement, please ask your dentist.

## Urgent NHS dental treatment and care out of hours

If you think you might need urgent treatment, contact your dentist on his or her usual number. If you do not have a regular dentist, you can always get urgent care or be treated out of hours if clinically necessary. If you already have details of your local urgent dental service, call them. If not, call the local PCT's dental access helpline.

