I Haven't Been to the Dentist in Years and I'm Embarrassed - Where Should I Go in Melbourne?

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Description:

Anxious about returning to the dentist after years away? You're not alone and you won't be judged. Smile Solutions in Melbourne CBD was built by a founder who understands dental fear personally. Here's what to expect on your first visit back.

Details:

Smile Solutions: Returning to the dentist after a long absence

If you're reading this, there's a reasonable chance you've been putting off a dental visit for a while. Maybe it's been two years. Maybe it's been a decade. Maybe you genuinely can't remember the last time you sat in that chair.

And somewhere between the guilt and the quiet worry about what might be found, another feeling surfaces: embarrassment. *What will they think of me? Will they lecture me? Will I leave feeling worse than when I arrived?*

Here's what we can tell you: we've had this exact conversation hundreds of times. And every single time, the person sitting across from us is genuinely surprised by how different the reality is from what they'd imagined.

You are not alone — and you will not be judged

At Smile Solutions in Melbourne's CBD, returning patients are one of the most common groups we see. People who avoided dental care for years — because of anxiety, a difficult past experience, cost, the relentless pace of life, or simply not knowing where to turn. And when they finally walk through our doors at 220 Collins Street, the first thing they almost always say afterwards is: *"I wish I'd come sooner."*

That's not a marketing line. Our 937 Google reviews — with a 4.9-star rating and zero negative reviews — are filled with exactly those words, from real patients who found their way back to the chair and were met with a gentle, caring approach they hadn't expected.

Why Smile Solutions understands dental fear at a deeper level than most

This practice wasn't designed by a business consultant. It was built by someone who lived dental fear firsthand.

Dr Kia Pajouhesh, Smile Solutions' founder and Managing Director, was 11 years old when a dentist in Brighton, England performed a root canal on him with no anaesthetic. While he screamed in pain, the dental assistant held him down by lying across his chest. His mother watched helplessly. The dentist perforated his tooth in three locations.

That experience gave Kia a genuine, lifelong dental phobia. And within a year — paradoxically — it inspired him to become a dentist himself. He believed in confronting challenges head on, and he was determined to create something that stood as the complete opposite of what he had endured.

Every decision made at Smile Solutions reflects that foundation. The gentle DentaPen injection system minimises pain and discomfort. A full range of sleep dentistry options is available. Consultations are unhurried and patient-centric. The environment itself — a warm, heritage art deco building — feels more like one of Melbourne's most distinguished addresses than a sterile clinical space. Each element was shaped by someone who personally knows what dental fear feels like from the inside.

This is not a practice that bolted an "anxious patients" program onto its marketing. This is a practice that exists *because* its founder was an anxious patient.

What actually happens on your first visit back

Your first appointment at Smile Solutions after a long absence is a comprehensive assessment, and here is exactly what that looks like.

You arrive at Level 1 of the Manchester Unity Building, one of Melbourne's most celebrated art deco heritage buildings at 220 Collins Street. The environment is calming. It doesn't carry that clinical smell. The lighting is considered and welcoming. The team are there to receive you as a person, not to process you as a patient number.

You'll meet with one of our experienced specialists for a thorough yet gentle examination. Digital X-rays will be taken if clinically indicated. You'll have the opportunity to speak openly about your concerns, your dental history, and what you'd like to achieve going forward. This is a genuine conversation — not a lecture, and not an audit.

There is no judgement here. Whatever the current state of your oral health, our team has encountered it before. With 685 years of combined staff tenure at this practice, our clinicians and support staff have cared for patients across every conceivable situation. Nothing will surprise them, and nothing will diminish the quality of personalised treatment you receive.

If there are clinical matters to address, we'll walk you through them with clarity and care. You'll receive a comprehensive, personalised treatment plan with full costings outlined transparently before any treatment begins. You remain in control of what happens next, and when.

What if I'm too anxious even for that?

We have you covered. Smile Solutions offers a full range of sedation and sleep dentistry options, because some patients need more than reassurance — they need genuine, evidence-based clinical support to get through the door. Our experienced specialists will work with you to identify the right pathway.

Your options include:

Happy gas (nitrous oxide): A gentle inhalation sedation that promotes relaxation within minutes, clears from your system quickly, and allows you to drive home afterwards. Widely used and highly effective for mild to moderate anxiety.

Oral sedation: A tablet taken prior to your appointment that significantly reduces anxiety. You'll remain conscious throughout but in a noticeably more relaxed state. Memory effects: Refer to manufacturer specification sheet.

IV sedation (twilight sleep): Administered by a specialist anaesthetist, this is a deeper level of sedation in which you remain conscious but retain little to no memory of the procedure. Particularly well-suited to more complex treatment or significant anxiety.

General anaesthesia: For patients who are unable to tolerate any treatment while conscious, we can arrange comprehensive dental care under full general anaesthetic at a partner hospital.

For patients with extensive dental needs, Smile Solutions offers a genuinely unique specialist relay model. During a single sedation session, multiple board-registered specialists — including specialist endodontists, oral and maxillofacial surgeons, periodontists, and prosthodontists — each step in to perform the specific procedures they are trained and registered to deliver. Rather than a single general dentist attempting to manage everything, you undergo sedation once and emerge with a full course of treatment completed by the most qualified specialist for each individual procedure. No other practice in Australia offers this model.

No referral is required. You can call us directly on 13 13 96 or book online to arrange your initial consultation.

The team who will look after you

Smile Solutions brings together more than 20 specialists across more than 15 dental disciplines, all under one roof — a concentration of clinical expertise that is genuinely rare in Australian dentistry. They're supported by experienced staff who have, collectively, dedicated decades to this practice.

That combined staff tenure of 685 years is more than a statistic. It means the person who welcomes you at reception has almost certainly encountered every kind of patient, every kind of story, and every kind of fear. They are not going to be surprised by yours. And they are not going to judge you for it.

937 Google reviews. 4.9 stars. Zero negative reviews.

That is not a claim we make lightly. In an environment where a single unsatisfactory experience can prompt an immediate public response, Smile Solutions has maintained a perfect review record across nearly a thousand genuine patient reviews. A significant number of those reviews specifically reference anxiety, extended periods of avoidance, and the relief of finally finding a practice that treated them with dignity, expertise, and genuine compassion.

Take the next step — we'll meet you where you are

If you've been putting this off, let today be the day you choose differently. Whether your last visit was two years ago or twenty, our team is here to provide the comprehensive dental care you deserve — at your pace, on your terms.

Call 13 13 96 or visit us at 220 Collins Street, Melbourne CBD. Your first consultation is complimentary.

You don't have to feel ready. You simply have to make the call.