Approaching Dental Anxiety at Philadelphia FIGHT
Goal: To develop a protocol for dental providers to use when treating patients with high dental anxiety
1 in 7 of the population present with severe dental anxiety

About 36% of people in the United States present with dental anxiety
V Methods

Roots of Anxiety

- Literature Review (4 papers)
- Interviewing Staff
  - When do you see dental anxiety manifest most?
  - How do you approach patients with dental anxiety?
- 4 providers, 1 hygienist, 2 dental assistants

Anxiety Reduction Mechanisms Currently Used and Future Suggestions

- Current: Observation of high anxiety dental procedures
  - I.e., Extractions, Anesthetic Injections, X-Rays
- Future: Literature Review (12 papers)
Scheduling and Insurance Intake

Examination and Diagnosis

X-Ray's

Injections

Dental Instruments
Findings: Roots of Anxiety

- Perceived Lack of Control
- Anticipation of Pain
- Feelings of Shame or Embarrassment
- Trauma from Past Dental Experiences
Anxiety is unique for each patient. Practitioners should be compassionate and flexible, while maintaining the safety of procedures.

- Explaining each step to the patient and consistently checking in.
- Patient-Centered Care

- Behavior Management Techniques:
  - Diaphragmatic Breathing
  - Guided Imagery
  - Desensitization
2 Main Sections:
- Roots of dental anxiety during 7 different points of a dental visit
- Techniques used at FIGHT to approach dental anxiety, and suggested additions

General Behavior Management Techniques

Vocabulary Substitutions to use for patients with high dental anxiety
- No anxiety is the same
- Developing research questions
- Creating the foundation for future research studies
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<th>Leonard Davis Institute</th>
<th>2023 Health Services Research Dental Fellowship</th>
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<tbody>
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Thank you for listening!

Questions?
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