

## **Painless or Less Pain?**

Yes, the choice is yours. Sometimes you are not completely in control, but at a certain point it is your decision. Recently a new patient seemed a little uncomfortable when I was examining the gums, though he didn't say anything.

When I asked, he said that the area has always been a problem, and he just tried to deal with it. Is the area sensitive with cleanings? "Yes." Have they ever numbed up the area when cleaning? "No." I was a little shocked that he felt he had to deal with the pain and we postponed the exam and cleaning until we had some time to numb the areas up. He was very happy with this solution and hopefully we will convince him how easy it is to maintain a regular cleaning schedule.

For some, it is even more complicated. They don't like local anesthetic.

Equipment and techniques have improved dramatically and the pain associated with a local anesthetic has almost become a fable. We have many other methods of easing apprehension and anxiety. These methods are very helpful in breaking the cycle of fear, are readily available to all patients, and very safe.

Patients only need to make the dentist aware of their discomfort. We will do anything we can to make the visit more pleasant. After a few successful visits most patients will be able to handle subsequent dental visits with ease. These are the best patients--they realize their comfort is in their control and are not afraid to tell the dentist what is bothering them. Just open up!