



Sedation Dentistry Patients Travel Up to 100 Miles for Care

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Dental patients typically choose dentists close to where they live, but a significant number of patients will travel long distances for dental treatment, reveals a recent Wealthy Dentist survey.

PR9.NET March 23, 2008 - San Francisco, CA - A recent dental survey by dental practice management resource The Wealthy Dentist asked dentists how far their average patient travels for treatment. Though most said about 5-10 miles, anecdotes abound of patients who have kept their dentists even after moving hundreds or thousands of miles away.

Twenty percent of dentists did report that their average patient travels ten miles or more for treatment. Urban and suburban dentists were more than twice as likely as rural dentists to report their average patient travels less than five miles. Some dentists cater to faraway patients. "I have both an active local clientele and an international clientele," said a New York prosthodontist. "Not enough patients come from far away," opined an oral surgeon, also from New York.

Specialists were somewhat more likely to report patients traveling long distances for dental treatment. "I have had a few patients who have travelled 150 miles one way to come to my office," said a California orthodontist. "Many of our patients travel up to 4 hours by car for their treatment," agreed a California implant dentist.

Some dentists have patients who live in other countries. "Less than 5% of my patients travel long distances, but I have a patient who lives in Japan," mentioned a New Jersey dentist. "There is a fellow who comes twice a year from the Netherlands," said a rural Ohio dentist. "Many local patients travel long distances. We also have a large number of patients from foreign countries who spend their summers here and prefer to have their dentistry performed in the United States," said a general dentist in rural Maine.

It's surprisingly common for patients to move away without switching dentists. "We have a handful of patients who have moved out of state but continue their care at our office when they are in the area," said a Colorado dentist. "About 20% of my patients live more than 20 miles from my downtown office. Some of them work downtown, and some are long-time patients who have moved 20-60 miles away but continue to come here for their dentistry," agreed a Florida dentist.

Dentists are more likely to have faraway patients if those patients are exposed to the dentist's marketing efforts. "We advertise on radio for sedation and complex dental services.

People drive well over one hundred miles, or as far out as they receive the radio's signal," said one suburban California dentist. Some emphasize that good dental care can overcome geographical inconvenience. "We have patients who fly in every year or less from over a thousand miles away. Our patients trust us. We never ever 'sell' dentistry. In fact, I talk patients out of procedures quite commonly. If patients know you're honest and have their best interest at heart, they will come from anywhere, no matter the distance," said a Minnesota dentist.

"Lots of dentists are missing the marketing boat by advertising only to patients within a few miles. But I know lots of dentists whose most valuable patients live far away, especially for sedation dentistry," said Jim Du Molin, dental management consultant and founder of dental website The Wealthy Dentist. "If you are in a rural area or offer special services (like sedation dentistry), many patients will drive an hour or more for treatment."

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About The Wealthy Dentist

The Wealthy Dentists is a dental marketing and dental practice management resources for dentists and dental practices. Sister company the Internet Dental Alliance provides dental practice websites, email patient newsletters, and online find a dentist directories specializing in areas such as cosmetic dentistry, dental implants, braces, dentures, sedation dentistry, and more.

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