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I hate going to the dentist.

It is not because I dislike having my teeth cleaned or worked on for that matter. I honestly don't even care that some stranger is holding my lips at weird angles and staring at my teeth, or that occasionally the dentist may be drilling away at one of them - which does not happen that often.

What I hate about going to the dentist is the cost. Unfortunately our insurance does not include dental; and I am learning that I, like most people without dental insurance, will take my children to the dentist before I take myself.

That was the case until recently when a sensitive tooth became a full on toothache that would not stop. For at least a year we had been receiving in our mail a flyer from a dentist in the next county. It contained great information about dental care, but more importantly - at least for me - it contained a coupon for free x-rays and an exam. I decided now was the time to cash in on my coupon.

I should have known by the name of the dental office - Dental Excellence of Napoleon - that this was not going to be your traditional dental visit. I arrived at the office 15 minutes before my appointment to fill out all of the new patient paperwork, instead I was greeted by a receptionist that stood up, called me by name and greeted me. She then did not hand me a slew of paperwork to fill out, but rather directed my husband and I to a reception area filled with comfortable seats and told us to make ourselves at home and help ourselves to refreshments.

There was not a pot of stale coffee waiting for us in the reception area, but rather a machine to make and pick our own flavor of coffee, tea or hot chocolate. There was also a mini-fridge filled with bottled water, Frappuccino and juice boxes and several other snacks. As we waited I noticed a large screen television with a sign that read "Win-Me." The dentist office rewards its patients for referrals. Not only do you earn gift certificates for area businesses for referrals, but this month you can actually win a flat screen television.

We had not been waiting long before Melissa, my dental hygienist, came out to greet us. She presented me with a gift bag for being a new patient and then took me back to a room filled with more comfy furniture and there we chatted like a couple of old friends. The whole time she was filling out that dull patient history paperwork that I dread filling out. By the time we were done I felt like I had a new best friend. Of course I make friends easily so that was not surprising.

As we made our way back to the chair she gave me a tour of the office and introduced me to the staff, including one of the dentists who took time to say hello and offer a smile.

As I made myself as comfortable as I could in the chair she offered me an aromatherapy neck pillow warm or cold, my preference, and pointed out that they also had a television I could watch with Dish TV during my appointment, or they had iPods if I prefer to listen to music.

By this point in my experience I was not sure if I had made an appointment at the dentist or the spa. Throughout the exam and cleaning Melissa was great to explain everything she was doing and why. She also kept all of my X-Rays, which were digital, right in front of me so I could see them.

The experience was near perfect. I only say near because hearing you need a root canal and crown is never pleasant, especially without dental insurance.

As I made my way back to the front with my newly cleaned teeth to check out I was again greeted by the pleasant receptionist who offered my husband and I fresh baked cookies.

I started to wonder if all the sugar was a ploy to get you back for more dental work, but with an experience like this - coming back wouldn't be an issue.

After such a bad experience with businesses last week, it was nice to finally find a business that knows customer satisfaction is the key to a successful future. Now if I can just do something about the price of that root canal.