

Patient assessment via synchronous teledentistry

TIPS



If the patient is using a **computer**



Have a light source behind the camera
As an alternative, make sure the monitor is as bright as possible



Bring the camera as close to the edge of the table/desk as possible (this makes it easier to get closer to the camera if needed)



If the patient is using a **cellphone**



Have a lightsource behind the phone



Set the camera so it is propped up (for example, against a book), horizontal, and set close to the edge of the table



Make sure the camera is in "selfie" mode



If the patient is going to take photos, in addition to the steps above be sure to:

1. turn the flash on
2. turn on the timer (recommend 3-10 seconds)

Helping the patient get comfortable with movements

Demonstrate each movement then have the patient practice.

01



Have turn their head left and right.

Same motion as shaking your head no

02



Have the patient tip their head left and right.

Bring your right ear to your right shoulder and your left ear to your left shoulder

03



Have the patient move their head up and down.

This is a standing up and sitting down-like motion

04



Have the patient tip their head up and down.

Same motion as nodding your head yes

Getting ready for the exam

- 1 Tell the patient to maximize/enlarge the window that they are looking at for the consultation.
- 2 Tell the patient you will be instructing them to put their fingers in the mouth to move their lips and cheeks and that you will have them move their head certain ways (up, down, left, right) so that you can see.
- 3 Tell the patient they will see a series of photos that you want them to mirror.
- 4 It's important that the patient be aware that you may need to do additional testing on the teeth and will most likely be taking an x-ray when he/she comes into the office.
- 5 The video examination helps us narrow down what their potential treatment needs will be but may not provide a definitive answer.
- 6 When ready to begin, tell the patient to wash his/her hands with soap and water for 20 seconds. Remind the patient to avoid touching any surfaces after he/she has washed his/her hands.
- 7 When ready, create a patient chart by asking the pertinent demographic questions.
- 8 Begin the exam by confirming any medications, medical conditions, social conditions, allergies, and dental history with the patient.

Questions to ask the patient if there is pain/infection

01



Ask the following questions (if applicable) if the chief complaint is a toothache hurts:

1. Is there pain? Swelling? Both?
2. How severe is the pain/swelling?
 - Is it limited to just around the gums? Does it appear extraorally?
4. How large is the swelling?
5. Is the swelling indurated (firm) or fluctuant (water in a bag feeling)?
6. Is there any purulence present?
7. When did pain/swelling begin?
8. Has the pain/swelling changed?
 - If the pain/swelling has changed, what time frame did it occur in?
8. Is the patient having any difficulty talking, breathing, swallowing, or opening?
9. Are there any other structures affected?
 - Maxillary: Is the tissue around the eye affected?
 - Mandibular: Can you palpate the inferior border of the mandible?
 - Intraoral: Is the uvula dropping to the tongue? Is the uvula deviating? Is the tongue being elevated?
10. Is there any lymphadenopathy? Is there a fever? Does the patient appear toxic?
11. If the patient is a child, is their behavior different than normal? Are they really grumpy, want to be left alone, not playing like they usually do, etc?

02



Based on the chief complaint, select the appropriate visual to show the patient

When the exam is over

01



If necessary, schedule your patient and/or discuss medication options and/or options for homecare.

02



Remind the patient to avoid touching any surfaces (if possible) and to immediately wash their hands for 20 seconds. If they can't wash their hands, they should use hand sanitizer. If they have to touch any surfaces, they should clean them as soon as possible, with something such as a Lysol wipe.

**Front teeth,
lip side**



1. Open your mouth slightly.
2. Pull your cheeks back and flip your upper lip up and your lower lip down.
3. Look straight at the camera.

**Bottom teeth,
lip side**



1. Open your mouth slightly.
2. Pull your lower lip down.
3. Look straight at the camera.

**Top teeth,
lip side**



1. Open slightly.
2. Pull your upper lip up.
3. Look straight at the camera.

**Bottom front
teeth, chewing
side**



1. Open really wide.
2. Pull your lower lip down.
3. Tip your head as far down as you can.

**Top front teeth,
chewing side**



1. Open about half way.
2. Pull your upper lip up.
3. Tip your head as far back as you can.
4. It can help to kneel on the ground to that you can tip back more.

**Bottom right,
cheek side**



1. Open slightly.
2. Pull your lower lip down and your right cheek down and to the side.
3. Turn your head slightly to the left.

**Bottom right,
tongue side**



1. Open your mouth as wide as you can.
2. Pull your lower lip down.
3. Try to keep your tongue flat or pull it to the back of your mouth.
4. Tip your head slightly down and turn slightly to your right.

**Top right,
cheek side**



1. Open slightly.
2. Pull your upper lip up and your right cheek up and to the side.
3. Turn your head slightly to the left.

**Top right,
tongue side**



1. Open your mouth as wide as you can.
2. Pull your right cheek to the side.
3. Try to keep your tongue flat or pull it to the back of your mouth.
4. Tip your head slightly up and turn slightly to your right.

**Bottom left,
cheek side**



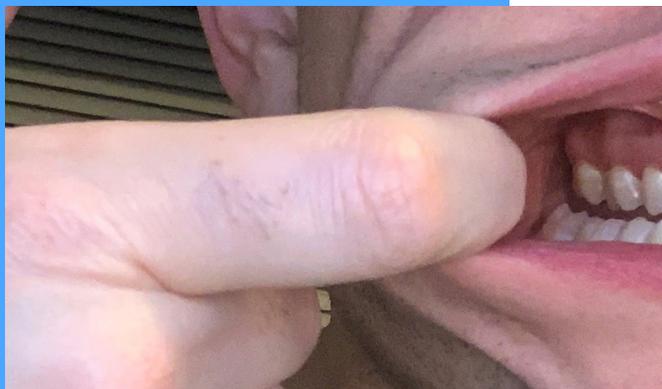
1. Open slightly.
2. Pull your lower lip down and pull your left cheek down and to the side.
3. Turn your head slightly to the right.

**Bottom left,
tongue side**



1. Open your mouth as wide as you can.
2. Pull your lower lip down.
3. Try to keep your tongue flat or pull it to the back of your mouth.
4. Tip your head slightly down and turn slight to your left.

**Top left,
cheek side**



1. Open slightly.
2. Pull your upper lip up and pull your left cheek up and to the side.
3. Turn your head slightly to the right.

Top left, tongue side



1. Open your mouth as wide as you can.
2. Pull your left cheek to the side.
3. Try to keep your tongue flat or pull it to the back of your mouth.
4. Tip your head slightly up and turn slight to your left.

Bottom back, chewing side



1. Open more than halfway.
2. Pull your cheeks out.
3. Tip your head slightly down.

Upper back, chewing side



1. Open more than halfway.
2. Pull your cheeks out.
3. Tip your head slightly back.
4. It can help to kneel on the ground to that you can tip back more.



Scott Howell, DMD, MPH is Assistant Professor and Director of Teledentistry at A.T. Still University, Arizona School of Dentistry and Oral Health. He develops clinical programs, screening and imaging protocols, and educational curriculum, including for teledentistry applications.

Dr. Howell is also a MouthWatch Clinical Advisor and a member of the TeleDent COVID-19 Advisory Panel.