Where can I find inexpensive dental work?

Written by Patrick Flynn Wednesday, 28 January 2009 21:00 - Last Updated Wednesday, 28 January 2009 22:41

"I have a toothache--I know what I would do in my home country, but what's the best way to handle this situation while here in the U.S.? Where can I get inexpensive dental care?"

Many students have asked me similar questions. Unfortunately there is not a good alternative that will allow you to get cheap dental work.

The <u>school of dentistry at MCV</u> in Richmond does offer some lower-priced work (maybe 40%-50% less). The work is done by dental students, and they generally do a great job because the quality of their work is being evaluated by instructors. Here are some possible problems with this option:

- as of the last time I checked, they do not work with filling cavities. They do offer extraction (pulling the tooth out entirely).
 - it is very difficult to get a space in their schedule.
- you would probably need to drive to Richmond twice... once to schedule the appointment and once to get the work done.

My dentist is <u>Dr. Thomas Starkey 434-973-2224</u>. His clinic does excellent work, and they make the experience very comfortable. There are around <u>100 dental practices in Charlottesville</u>

. If you have one cavity, I would guess that you might have to pay about \$150. All the dental practices have similar prices. Be aware that their schedules are usually pretty full, so you might have to wait a couple of weeks before your appointment.

Some students opt to wait to receive treatment when they return home during UVA's winter or summer break. I do not think this is a good option for most people because waiting can allow the problem to become much worse. If it gets bad enough and you find yourself unable to work or study, you may end up having to get dental work immediately, and then you would have to pay much more because the problems have become more advanced.

Dental insurance policies are available for purchase. In some cases, there is not a long waiting period before coverage becomes effective. In some cases you might even find out you have the dental problem, and then buy insurance before receiving treatment.

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