



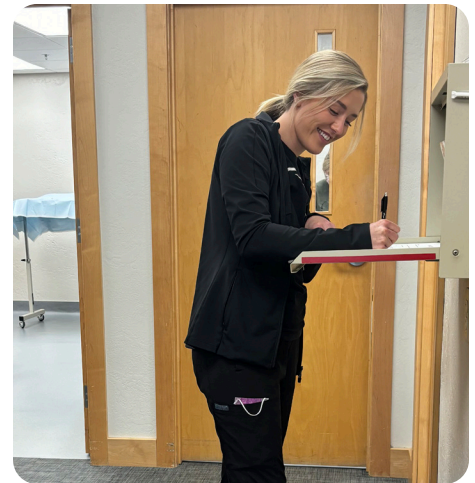
# Oral Surgery Assistant Role and Responsibilities at an OMS Practice



## What do oral surgery assistants do?

Oral surgery assistants handle a wide variety of tasks on any given workday including, but not limited to:

- Greeting patients, reviewing their health histories and calming their anxiety
- Preparing instruments for procedures
- Obtaining X-rays
- Assisting the oral and maxillofacial surgeon (OMS) during exams and procedures
- Sterilizing instruments and performing other infection control duties, where states allow



## What role do oral surgery assistants play in building patient trust and setting the stage for a positive appointment experience?

When patients are ready for their appointment, they are greeted by the oral surgery assistant. Assistants have a unique opportunity to set the tone for the appointment and make the patient comfortable. As appropriate, they help answer questions about the appointment and planned treatment.



## What skills and personal qualities make someone an effective and successful oral surgery assistant?

While a background in the medical or dental field is helpful, it is not always necessary. Oral surgery assistants receive ample on-the-job training. While not required, the following can benefit candidates:

- Previous experience as a dental assistant and/or understanding of basic concepts and terminology relevant to oral and maxillofacial surgery
- Prior infection control experience (though OMS practice staff regularly receive related training)
- Ability to be a team player
- Ability to work in a fast-paced environment
- Ability to work under pressure

Assistants must be comfortable in a surgical setting. If possible, shadow or observe in an OMS practice and gain insight into a typical work day.



## What career growth opportunities are available to oral surgery assistants who want to expand their skills and take on new responsibilities?

Various opportunities that may be available to oral surgery assistants include:

- Becoming a surgical treatment coordinator.
- Helping in patient care coordination – scheduling procedures and assisting at the reception desk.
- Being involved in referral contact marketing and social media duties.
- Advancing career growth through the dental anesthesia assistant program (AAOMS.org/DAANCE), learning to care for patients undergoing sedation and anesthesia for surgery.



**Interested in becoming an oral surgery assistant?**

**Visit [AAOMS.org/OralSurgeryAssistant](https://www.aaoms.org/OralSurgeryAssistant) to learn more.**