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Code of Ethics

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## ADA Code of Ethics (July 10 1900)

American Dental Association

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American dental association.

# TRANSACTIONS

OF THE

# National Dental Association

AT THE

## FOURTH ANNUAL SESSION,

HELD AT

Old Point Comfort, Va.,

COMMENCING JULY 10, 1900.

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PHILADELPHIA:  
THE S. S. WHITE DENTAL MFG. CO.  
1901.

## Code of Ethics.

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### ARTICLE I.—THE DUTIES OF THE PROFESSION TO THEIR PATIENTS.

SECTION 1. The dentist should be ever ready to respond to the wants of his patrons, and should fully recognize the obligations involved in the discharge of his duties toward them. As they are in most cases unable to correctly estimate the character of his operations, his own sense of right must guarantee faithfulness in their performance. His manner should be firm, yet kind and sympathizing, so as to gain the respect and confidence of his patients; and even the simplest case committed to his care should receive that attention which is due to operations performed on living, sensitive tissue.

SEC. 2. It is not to be expected that the patient will possess a very extended or a very accurate knowledge of professional matters. The dentist should make due allowance for this, patiently explaining many things which may seem quite clear to himself, thus endeavoring to educate the public mind so that it will properly appreciate the beneficent efforts of our profession. He should encourage no false hopes by promising success when, in the nature of the case, there is uncertainty.

SEC. 3. The dentist should be temperate in all things, keeping both mind and body in the best possible health, that his patients may have the benefit of that clearness of judgment and skill which is their right.

### ARTICLE II.—MAINTAINING PROFESSIONAL CHARACTER.

SECTION 1. A member of the dental profession is bound to maintain its honor, and to labor earnestly to extend its sphere of usefulness. He should avoid everything in language and conduct calculated to dishonor his profession, and should ever manifest a due respect for his brethren. The young should show special respect to their seniors; the aged, special encouragement to their juniors.

SEC. 2. It is unprofessional to resort to public advertisements, cards, handbills, posters, or signs, calling attention to peculiar styles of work, lowness of prices, special modes of operating; or to claim superiority over neighboring practitioners; to publish reports of cases or certificates in the public prints; to circulate or recommend nostrums; or to perform any other similar acts. But nothing in this section shall be so construed as to imply that it is unprofessional for dentists to announce in the public prints, or by cards, simply their names, occupation, and place of business, or, in the

same manner, to announce their removal, absence from, or return to business, or to issue to their patients appointment cards having a fee bill for professional services thereon.

SEC. 3. When consulted by the patient of another practitioner, the dentist should guard against inquiries or hints disparaging to the family dentist, or calculated to weaken the patient's confidence in him; and if the interests of the patient will not be endangered thereby, the case should be temporarily treated, and referred back to the family dentist.

SEC. 4. When general rules shall have been adopted by members of the profession practicing in the same localities in relation to fees, it is unprofessional and dishonorable to depart from those rules, except when variation of circumstance requires it. And it is ever to be regarded as unprofessional to warrant operations as an inducement to patronage.

#### ARTICLE III.—CONSULTATIONS.

Consultations should be promoted in difficult or protracted cases, as they give rise to confidence, energy, and broader views in practice.

In consultations, that courtesy and just dealing which is the right of all should be especially observed.

#### ARTICLE IV.—THE RELATIVE DUTIES OF DENTISTS AND PHYSICIANS.

Dental surgery is a specialty in medical science. Physicians and dentists should both bear this in mind. The dentist is professionally limited to diseases of the dental organs and adjacent parts. With these he should be more familiar than the general practitioner is expected to be; and while he recognizes the broader knowledge of the physician in regard to diseases of the general system, the latter is under equal obligations to respect his higher attainments in his specialty.

#### ARTICLE V.—THE MUTUAL DUTIES OF THE PROFESSION AND THE PUBLIC.

Dentists are frequent witnesses, and, at the same time, the best judges of the impositions perpetrated by quacks, and it is their duty to enlighten and warn the public in regard to them. For this and many other benefits conferred by the competent and honorable dentist, the profession is entitled to the confidence and respect of the public, who should always discriminate in favor of the true man of science and integrity against the empiric and impostor. The public has no right to tax the time and talents of the profession in examinations, prescriptions, or in any way without proper remuneration.