



Delta Dental Cares about Your Oral Health *...and* Your General Health

Smile Smart for Your Health: Enhanced Benefits Program

As a result of the growing scientific evidence connecting oral health to overall health, Delta Dental of South Dakota now offers the **Smile Smart for Your Health** enhanced benefits program.

More than 120 diseases show early symptoms in the mouth and may be first detected by a dental exam. Periodontal disease, more commonly called gum disease, is the body's inflammatory response to the bacteria in the mouth and many diseases and medical issues, including heart disease, diabetes and pre-term births, are being linked to these infections.

The **Smile Smart** program customizes benefits for individual subscribers, offering additional dental treatments to those who have specific health conditions (diabetes, pregnancy or serious

periodontal conditions) that can be improved by additional dental care. In addition, Delta Dental is now offering dental implants and coverage to fight oral cancer as part of our standard benefit plans.

Benefits for Persons with Diabetes

A number of research studies show that when diabetics have their teeth cleaned professionally, their blood sugar levels are easier to control. This is significant because glycemic control has proven to be one of the best ways to prevent complications of diabetes.

Delta Dental members who are diabetic are eligible for four periodontal maintenance visits in a year or four dental prophylaxes (adult cleanings) in a year. There is no end date on this additional coverage, no age requirement and the patient may be the subscriber, spouse or other covered dependent.



Benefits for Pregnant Women

An increase in the number of dental cleanings may help expectant mothers give birth to full-term, healthy babies by preventing or minimizing gum disease, a condition that can increase the likelihood of premature birth. Scientific evidence has long indicated that pregnant women with gum disease may be up to seven times more likely to give birth to premature babies. According to the National Institutes of Health, as many as 19 percent of the 250,000 premature low-weight infants born in the U.S. each year may be attributed to infectious oral disease.

Pregnant members are eligible for one additional cleaning or periodontal maintenance visit during the time of the pregnancy. There is no age requirement and the patient may be the subscriber, spouse or other covered dependent.

Benefits for Members Who Have Had Periodontal Surgery or Bone Loss

For patients with an indicator of periodontal surgery or bone loss, members are eligible for four periodontal maintenance visits in a benefit year. Additionally, following periodontal surgery, the enrollee will be eligible for two applications of topical fluoride varnish in a benefit year. There is no end date on this additional coverage, no age requirement and the patient may be the subscriber, spouse or other covered dependent.

***Your dentist may or may not charge for exams related to your added periodontal maintenance or cleanings. Please note that the additional exams are not included with the enhanced benefits of additional periodontal maintenance or cleanings.**

Benefits to Help Fight Oral Cancer

Each year, oral cancer kills more people in this country than melanoma or cervical cancer. One American dies every hour from oral cancer, a death rate that has remained virtually unchanged for more than 40 years. While tobacco and alcohol have long been considered the culprits in cases of oral cancer, the American Dental Association now reports that 27 percent of its victims don't smoke, drink or chew.

Since 2005 Delta Dental has covered a procedure that general dentists can use with their patients for the prevention and early detection of oral cancer. Called a "brush biopsy," the procedure uses a brush biopsy tool to identify and analyze cancerous and precancerous cells. Using a brush biopsy, dentists can identify and treat abnormal cells that could become cancerous, or detect the disease in its earliest stages. The simple procedure can be done during a regular exam, and involves little or no patient discomfort. It is much simpler and less costly than traditional scalpel biopsies for oral cancer detection. The procedure has been endorsed by the American Dental Association.

In Addition!

Implant Coverage

Dental implants have grown in popularity in recent years, and scientific evidence shows their effectiveness to often be equal to or better than that of bridges or dentures. Therefore, implants are becoming a standard part of coverage under Delta Dental of South Dakota plans.

- Coverage for implants will be included at the prosthetic coverage level, along with fixed bridges, removable partials and complete dentures
- Implant placement will be subject to the group's annual maximums

Smile Smart is Easy!

The only documentation required is a notation on the claim form from your dentist about your health condition.