

Health *through* Oral Wellness®



A healthy mouth is a vital part of overall health.

That's why we're introducing Health *through* Oral Wellness. Health *through* Oral Wellness is a unique, patient-centered program that adds benefits to a Delta Dental plan based on individual oral health needs. A Delta Dental network dentist trained in Health *through* Oral Wellness will conduct a clinical risk assessment during your regular preventive visit. The assessment measures the risk and severity of periodontal disease, and the risk of tooth decay.

Additional benefits are based on an individual's risk and severity scores and may include:

- Additional cleanings
- Sealants (child and adult)
- Periodontal maintenance
- Fluoride (child and adult)
- And more...



What does it cost?

Practically nothing. The Health *through* Oral Wellness program works with your existing dental plan. Annual maximums, deductibles and other plan details will still apply, but most dental plans cover preventive services at 100%.

For employers, the cost is net neutral. The cost of additional preventive services is offset by claims savings on more expensive restorative procedures. There is no negative impact on plan performance. In fact, over time employers save money by having healthier employees with fewer unexpected emergencies.

Health *through* Oral Wellness drives the right behavior.

A study of Northeast Delta Dental Health *through* Oral Wellness members showed that just having a risk assessment increased the average cleanings per year from 1.5 to 2.4. And those assessed as high risk patients increased from 1.2 cleanings per year to 3.3 cleanings per year. That means people who need the cleanings the most are getting them. That's a lot of healthier smiles!

Why does oral health and prevention matter?

Better Health

- Untreated gum (periodontal) disease has been linked to health conditions like stroke, heart disease, asthma, diabetes, and Alzheimer's disease. The common denominators are infection and inflammation.
- Dental caries (causing cavities) is the most common chronic childhood disease in the U.S. A national survey found that approximately 1 in 7 children ages 6-12 had suffered a toothache in the previous six months.

Lower Costs

Addressing oral health issues may help lower the cost of medical care and the economic impact associated with some chronic conditions and pregnancy.

In studies run from 2005-2012, private insurers and policy experts used medical claims data to explore cost savings from plan members with select chronic diseases who also had periodontal treatment.* The annual medical cost reduction ranges for each disease were significant:

- Diabetes: \$1,292 - \$2,840
- Coronary Artery Disease: \$1,090 - \$4,231
- Cerebrovascular Disease: \$2,831 - \$5,681
- Pregnant Women: \$2,433
- Rheumatoid Arthritis: \$581



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deltadentalsd.com
1-800-627-3961