

Collaborate ♦ Partner ♦ Support
Focusing on Members' Health

Clinical Focus: Fluoride Continues to Contribute to Improved Oral Health

There was a benefit to being poor centuries ago. Only the wealthy had access to the luxury of having sugar in their diet. However, the pleasant taste of sugar was offset by its cariogenic properties, and these individuals suffered the disease of dental caries. As sugar became cheaper and refined carbohydrates were introduced into the diet, dental decay occurred not only among the wealthy, but the average person as well.

Experts began to notice that there was less decay among individuals living in areas where there was naturally occurring fluoride compounds in the water supply. If the fluoride concentration was too high, fluorosis—or brown staining and mottling of the teeth—could occur. If the fluoride concentration was too low, the benefits were non-existent. This led to the use of fluoride being used as a way of helping to prevent the initial

demineralization of the tooth or the progression of the caries process.

However, the battle against dental caries is not over. Today, more people are living with chronic diseases, taking medication that can cause a dry mouth, or suffering xerostomia as a side effect of medical treatment. Each of these circumstances places people at greater risk for dental caries.

A decrease in saliva production and dry mouth are associated with a number of medical and psychological conditions including diabetes, AIDS, Alzheimer's disease, cystic fibrosis, depression, Lupus, and many other conditions. Aging can also be a factor in decreased saliva flow.

The use of prescription and over-the-counter medications can also contribute to decreased saliva flow. Type, dosage, and number of medications

can all play a role in the severity of the xerostomia. Medications that can contribute to xerostomia include antihistamines, pain medications, high blood pressure medications, and antidepressants.



Robert Lewando, DDS, Executive Director, Dental Blue shares his expertise in this article

Damage to the salivary glands from radiation to the head and neck for cancer treatment can also reduce the amount of saliva produced. These effects are often irreversible, leading not only to increased caries, but an increased likelihood of osteonecrosis from non-healing extraction sites.

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Include Member ID Number on All Claims

As a reminder, BCBSMA assigns unique ID numbers to Dental Blue subscribers and does not use Social Security numbers. To avoid delays in payment, be sure to submit your claims with the number shown on the member's ID card.

As always, we recommend that you ask your patients for their ID cards at each visit so you can check eligibility and benefits before rendering services. ❖

The member ID is listed here on the card →



Is Your Address or Status Changing? Be Sure to Let Us Know!

Are you planning on making changes to your name, address, tax ID number, or practice affiliation? If so, please let us know in advance by following

the instructions noted in the chart. We ask that you allow us 4-6 weeks to make any necessary changes to our system.

To reach your Dental Network Manager regarding any of these changes, please call 1-800-882-1178, Option 4. ❖

If You Are:	Follow These Instructions:
Changing your address or legal name	Submit a new W-9 Request for Taxpayer Identification Number Form. You can download the form from BlueLinks for Providers. Log on to www.bluecrossma.com/provider and click on Resource Center>Forms>Administrative Forms. Please fax back to the attention of your Dental Network Manager at 617-246-9397.
Changing your Tax ID Number (TIN)	Your practice will need to be recontracted under your updated TIN. Call your Dental Network Manager for the appropriate contracts.
Changing your practice affiliation	If you are joining a practice, please contact your Dental Network Manager. She can provide you with the appropriate paperwork based on your current status with BCBSMA and the products in which the office you are joining is enrolled.
Opening a practice	Please call your Dental Network Manager. She will mail you the appropriate paperwork depending on your current status with BCBSMA and the products for which you wish to enroll.

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The value of fluoride treatment, whether it is used systemically or topically, either in over-the-counter or prescription applications, can help reduce the likelihood of dental caries. The value of fluoride has expanded, not just in helping to prevent the initial cavity formation in a child, but in managing the oral side effects of various medical conditions, medications, and medical treatments.

The cornerstone of good oral health through good oral hygiene has not changed. However, the appropriate application of fluoride into these processes has been a key benefit in our fight to improve and maintain the oral health of our patients. ❖



Reminder: Rollover Benefits Are Available to Many Dental Blue Members

To help Dental Blue members get the most out of their plan, we offer an accumulated maximum rollover benefit to all small group dental plans and some large accounts. This benefit allows members to roll over a portion of their unused dental benefits from year to year.

To be eligible for maximum rollover benefits, the member must:

- Receive at least one service during the benefit period

- Remain a member of the plan for the entire benefit period

- Not exceed the claim payment threshold in the benefit period.

To determine a member's accumulated amount, be sure to check benefits and eligibility using Emdeon DPS before performing services.

Log on to bluecrossma.com/provider and click on Technology Tools>Go to Emdeon DPS.

Click Eligibility Search.

Enter the applicable information into the required fields (e.g., your Tax ID, NPI, subscriber's ID and date of birth).

If you have questions about this benefit, please call your Dental Network Manager at 1-800-882-1178, Option 4. ❖

If a member's dental plan annual maximum benefit amount is:	And if the member's total claims don't exceed this amount for the benefit period*:	Then BCBSMA will roll over this amount for the member to use next year and beyond*:	However, rollover totals will be capped at this amount*:
\$500-\$749	\$200	\$150	\$500
\$750-\$999	\$300	\$200	\$500
\$1,000-\$1,249	\$500	\$350	\$1,000
\$1,250-\$1,499	\$600	\$450	\$1,250
\$1,500-\$1,999	\$700	\$500	\$1,250
\$2,000-\$2,499	\$800	\$600	\$1,500
\$2,500-\$2,999	\$900	\$700	\$1,500
\$3,000 or more	\$1,000	\$750	\$1,500

**This is not a Flexible Spending Account. The amount reflects a member's benefit maximum for a given year.*

BCBSMA's Pain Management Program Takes Effect July 1, 2012

Earlier this spring, BCBSMA mailed an *FYI* to you announcing a new opioid management program that we are implementing starting July 1, 2012. For more background and to familiarize yourself with this program, we encourage you to refer to our March 2012 *FYI*, available online. Log on to our website at

bluecrossma.com/provider and click on News for You>FYIs. Then select the *FYI* titled *Announcing an Opioid Management Program Starting July 1, 2012* (PC-1483). ❖





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Not registered for our website? Go to www.bluecrossma.com/provider and click on Register Now.

Mass. Dental Hygienists' Conference Coming This Fall

Please join us at the annual conference of the Massachusetts Dental Hygienists' Association (MDHA) at the Crowne Plaza in Natick, September 21-22, 2012. This year's theme is "Energize Yourself."

Since hygienists are often the first source of information for patients about the relationship between their oral health and physical health, we hope you'll visit our booth at the conference to learn about Dental Blue's Total Health Solution—our education, targeted outreach, and condition-specific services we offer

our members. You and your colleagues can use our Total Health Solution resources to help educate patients about the connection between oral health and overall health.

For more details about the conference, visit www.massdha.org or call your BCBSMA Dental Network Manager at 1-800-882-1178, Option 4. ❖

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