



HEALTHY Smiles, **HEALTHY Lives**
BENEFITS

Delta Dental of Missouri

Did You Know?

- Every day, researchers are discovering more and more links between oral health and overall health.
- Many diseases can be diagnosed during a routine dental exam.
- Regular preventive dental care will have a significant, positive impact on not only oral health but overall health as well.
- Some degree of periodontal disease impacts 3 out of 4 adults over the age of 35.
- Periodontal disease is linked to complications with diabetes and premature births.
- Increased preventive care and maintenance for periodontal disease can help reduce the risks of some illnesses, and thus help reduce long-term medical care costs for those patients.
- Sealants in young children reduce the incidence of cavities by 80% over a 5-year period. Sealants in adults have a similar impact.
- Technical improvements with implants are reducing their cost and improving long-term effectiveness, making them a preferred alternative to bridges in some cases.
- Brush Biopsy offers an early detection procedure for oral cancer, one of the most deadly cancers.
- More than 30,000 people are diagnosed with oral cancer annually, claiming 8,000 lives each year.

Introducing *HEALTHY Smiles, HEALTHY Lives* BENEFITS

Delta Dental of Missouri offers you *Healthy Smiles, Healthy Lives Benefits*, an innovative package of health protection benefits that improves wellness by enhancing coverage for greater oral health preventive care and protection.

We are confident that *Healthy Smiles, Healthy Lives Benefits* help maximize wellness and we offer these benefits to employers as part of our standard benefit recommendations.

Healthy Smiles, Healthy Lives Benefits provide oral health coverage that improves oral health and also overall health and wellness:

Basic Package

- Delta Dental provides an enhanced benefit of up to four periodontal and/or dental cleanings per year to prevent further bone and gum decay and to reduce the risks from some illnesses and medical conditions. These increased benefits are offered to:
 - Pregnant women
 - Persons with diabetes
 - Persons diagnosed with periodontal disease
 - Persons with suppressed immune systems due to chemotherapy and/or radiation treatment, HIV infection, organ transplant, and/or stem cell (bone marrow) transplant
 - Persons experiencing kidney failure or who are undergoing dialysis

Your eligible employees can self-report their condition(s) to Delta Dental to obtain added cleanings. They have the option to report online or by mail. Their dentists can also file a report for them.

- Brush Biopsy for early oral cancer detection is fully covered – to reduce oral cancer risk and improve the odds for recovery.

Option 1 – Coverage for Implants

- Implants are a viable alternative to bridges for some, with less invasive damage to adjoining teeth. Delta Dental will work with your company to determine the best alternative for implant coverage based on your company's needs.

Option 2 – Enhanced Coverage for Sealants

- Full coverage for sealants for children and adults – to help reduce cavities.

Option 3 – Improved Bitewing Schedule

- Incorporates new FDA guidelines for bitewing x-rays for people over the age of 15 to reduce exposure to x-ray radiation.

Delta Dental worked with dentists and also data from the largest claims data warehouse in the country, owned by Delta Dental, to review the long-term health outcomes of treatments and procedures. All evidence points to the clear health advantages of incorporating these new benefits.



Healthy Smiles, Healthy Lives Benefits mean improved oral health and overall health. Consider including **Healthy Smiles, Healthy Lives Benefits** with your Delta Dental benefits plan. Delta Dental also has outreach communication materials that you can share with your employees. It's something you and your entire company can smile about.

Healthy Smiles and Healthy Lives Go Hand in Hand

Increasingly, research is recognizing the important links between oral health and overall health. Along with this, dentists are increasingly recognized for their important role as health advocate and diagnostician.

During a routine office visit, the dentist is in a position to identify symptoms for many diseases and illnesses. And because many families visit their dentist more often than their family physician, the dentist may have an opportunity for early detection that the physician may not.

Also important – complications for some illnesses and medical conditions are being linked to periodontal disease. Regular preventive oral health care has the potential to positively impact these illnesses.

Oral Health Preventive Care Helps Improve Overall Health

Links between oral health and overall health:

- **Premature birth** – bacteria associated with periodontal disease are responsible for increased levels of prostaglandin (PGE₂), a protein responsible for inducing labor.
- **Diabetes** is associated with an abnormally high degree of gum inflammation and a higher risk for periodontal disease. That disease in turn makes blood sugar levels more difficult to control. Thus, treating periodontal disease is an important part of managing diabetes.
- **Suppressed immune system** – people with suppressed immune systems due to chemotherapy and/or radiation treatment, organ or stem cell transplant or HIV infection have a greater risk for periodontal disease.
- **Patients with kidney failure or those undergoing dialysis** can benefit from extra periodontal cleanings and maintenance.



The dentist can identify symptoms of many diseases and illnesses during a routine dental exam.



For more information, contact Delta Dental of Missouri at **1-800-392-1167**, or visit us online at **www.deltadentalmo.com**



 **DELTA DENTAL®**

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