

# Something extra for you — and your health

Your dental plan offers extra benefits if you have certain medical conditions



Good dental health impacts your whole health, especially if you have certain medical conditions. If you take part in one of our care management programs, you have access to extra dental services, including more cleanings or gum care, at no extra cost. That's 100% coverage of extra dental services with no out-of-pocket costs. These extra services won't count against your plan's yearly coverage maximum.

## If you have any of these conditions<sup>1</sup>...

- Diabetes
- Pregnancy
- Cancer treated with chemotherapy
- Head and neck cancer treated with chemotherapy and/or radiation
- Certain heart conditions
- Organ and bone marrow transplant
- Suppressed immune system (HIV/AIDS)
- End-stage kidney disease
- Stroke

## ... you'll get extra dental services, such as:

- Cleanings
- Fluoride
- Gum maintenance
- Gum scaling and root planing (deep cleaning)
- Routine or problem-focused exams
- Sealants

Call your dentist's office today to set up your appointment. To find a dentist in your plan's network, use the **Find Care & Cost** feature on our **Sydney<sup>SM</sup> Health** app or **anthem.com**.

## Did you know?

**46%** of adults age 30 or older show signs of gum disease<sup>2</sup>

**1 in 4** adults in the U.S. have untreated tooth decay<sup>2</sup>



If you're not yet in one of our care management programs but have a qualifying condition, are pregnant, or have diabetes, you can sign up for dental extras.

Log in to **anthem.com**, go to *Support*, and fill out the "Extra Dental Benefit Form" or call Member Services at the number on your ID card.



# A healthy mouth is essential if you have diabetes or are pregnant. Here's why.

## If you have diabetes

High blood sugar can affect the health of your teeth and gums. It can raise your risk for:<sup>3</sup>



### Cavities (tooth decay)

The higher your blood sugar, the more sugars, starches, and acid can wear away at your teeth and cause plaque, which can lead to cavities.



### Early gum disease (gingivitis)

Diabetes makes it harder to fight off bacteria. If plaque builds up, it can harden into tartar, which can lead to gums that bleed and become swollen.



### Advanced gum disease (periodontitis)

Gum disease can destroy the tissue and bone that support your teeth. Diabetes also makes it harder to fight off gum infections and heal from gum disease.

## If you are pregnant

Keeping your teeth and gums healthy while pregnant can help you have a healthy baby. Here are a few reasons why:



Pregnancy can raise the risk for dental health issues like gum disease, which has been linked to premature birth.<sup>4</sup>



Pregnant women may be at a higher risk for cavities due to behavior changes like frequent snacking or not brushing their teeth as often as usual due to morning sickness.<sup>4</sup>



Children whose mothers have untreated cavities or lost teeth while pregnant are three times more likely to have cavities as a child.<sup>5</sup>

## Signs of gum disease

If you have one or more of these symptoms, see your dentist right away:

- Gums that are red, sore, swollen, or bleeding.
- Gums that have pulled away from your teeth (recession).
- Bad breath or a bad taste in your mouth that doesn't go away.

## Checklist for a healthy mouth<sup>6</sup>

Keeping your teeth clean and your gums healthy is easier when you follow these simple tips:

- Visit a dentist every six months for routine cleanings and checkups.
- Limit food and drinks high in sugar to help prevent cavities.
- Brush your teeth with a soft-bristled toothbrush to reduce gum irritation two times a day — and after meals and snacks when you can.
- Use fluoride toothpaste to help strengthen teeth and prevent cavities.
- Floss every day, at least once a day.



## How healthy are your teeth and gums?

Take an online Dental Health Assessment by logging on to **anthem.com** or using our Sydney Health app.

Using the website or app, you can also email questions to a dental hygienist and receive a response within 48 hours.

<sup>1</sup> Check your dental plan documents for details on condition eligibility and what enhanced dental benefits your plan covers.

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). *Adult Oral Health* (accessed April 2023); [cdc.gov/oralhealth/](https://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/).

<sup>3</sup> National Library of Medicine, National Center for Biotechnology Information: *Impact of treating oral disease on preventing vascular diseases: A model-based cost-effectiveness analysis of periodontal treatment among patients with Type 2 diabetes* (December 27, 2019); [pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31882408/](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31882408/).

<sup>4</sup> March of Dimes: *Dental health during pregnancy* (accessed April 2023); [marchofdimes.org](https://www.marchofdimes.org/).

<sup>5</sup> CDC: *Pregnancy and oral health* (accessed April 2023); [cdc.gov/oralhealth/](https://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/).

<sup>6</sup> CDC: *Oral Health Tips* (accessed April 2023); [cdc.gov/oralhealth/](https://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/).

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