



HEALTH MATTERS

A PUBLICATION FOR TRICARE® BENEFICIARIES

The Dentist is In ...

Healthy Eating Contributes to Oral Health



Col. James Honey
Chief, TRICARE Dental
Care Section
Defense Health Agency

When people think of good oral health, they typically think of brushing, flossing and visiting the dentist. These actions are certainly critical to strong oral health. What people tend to overlook, however, is the impact of the foods and beverages they eat and drink every day.

Sugary sweets, like Halloween candy, are major contributors to tooth decay and cavities. Eating a wide variety of nutritious foods like fruits, vegetables and whole grains will help keep your teeth and body healthy. High-fiber foods like fruits and vegetables take longer to chew, which stimulates saliva. This increased production is beneficial because saliva neutralizes the acids that

damage teeth. High-fiber foods also have a high-water content, an added benefit for both your teeth and body.

When it comes to beverages, many juices are loaded with added sugar. Be sure to read labels and look for 100 percent fruit juice or beverages with little or no sugar added. Water acts as a rinsing agent for teeth, which is even better if the water is fluorinated, acting to strengthen enamel. Try to gradually phase out the sugary sodas and juices from your diet and increase your water intake.

I encourage you to view your oral health holistically and make small changes that will make a big difference. To learn more about dental health, visit www.uccitdp.com and click on "Health and Wellness." ★

Thank you,
Col. James Honey



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ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

Overview of United Concordia Benefits

As of May 1, 2017, your TRICARE Dental Program (TDP) benefit is administered by United Concordia. See [Page 2](#).

TDP Premium Rates

TDP Premium rates change every May 1. For the current rates, see [Page 3](#).

Oral Cancer 101

The best way to prevent oral cancer is to minimize your risk factors. For signs, symptoms and risk factors, see [Page 6](#).



Overview of United Concordia Benefits

As of May 1, 2017, your TRICARE Dental Program (TDP) benefit is administered by United Concordia Companies, Inc. (United Concordia). The TDP provides dental coverage to eligible active duty family members and members of the Selected Reserve and Individual Ready Reserve (IRR).

Along with this change, the TDP offers some of the following improvements:

- The maximum TRICARE pays per beneficiary each year increased from \$1,300 to \$1,500.
- Beneficiaries used to pay 20 percent of the cost of sealants. Now beneficiaries pay nothing for sealants placed on permanent molars (back teeth) through age 18.
- Family members will be automatically enrolled at the age of 1 instead of 4. This allows children to be seen by dentists at younger ages, setting them up for great future dental health.
- Monthly premiums will go down for all TDP beneficiaries. (See the chart on **Page 3** for specific premium amounts.)

To identify which dentists in your area are in the TDP network, please visit: www.uccitdp.com/find-a-dentist. If your current dentist is not in network, you can nominate them by completing a form found at the “Find a Dentist” link above. Always confirm network participation status with your dentist prior to receipt of care.

More information about the TDP changes will be communicated soon. Visit www.tricare.mil/tdp and www.uccitdp.com to learn more about the plan. ★

**TO IDENTIFY WHICH DENTISTS IN YOUR AREA ARE IN THE TDP NETWORK, PLEASE VISIT:
WWW.UCCITDP.COM/FIND-A-DENTIST**



TDP Premium Rates

The following table lists your TRICARE Dental Premium (TDP) monthly premium rates. Premium amounts will be deducted from your military pay account or billed directly to you. Visit the TRICARE TDP website for more information www.uccitdp.com. ★

SPONSOR'S MILITARY STATUS	MONTHLY PREMIUMS
Active Duty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single: \$11.10 • Family: \$28.87
Selected Reserve and Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) (Mobilization Only)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sponsor only: \$11.10 • Single: \$27.76 • Family: \$72.18 • Sponsor and family: \$83.28
IRR (Non-Mobilization)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sponsor only: \$27.76 • Single: \$27.76 • Family: \$72.18 • Sponsor and family: \$94.94

YOUR ANNUAL MAXIMUM BENEFIT

Under the TRICARE Dental Program, there is a \$1,500 annual maximum benefit per beneficiary, per plan year for non-orthodontic services. Each plan year begins May 1 and ends April 30. Payments for certain diagnostic and preventive services are not applied against the annual maximum. There is an additional \$1,200 maximum for dental care necessitated by an accident.

Give your Children a Head Start to Lifelong Dental Health



As a parent, you want the best for your children. This includes teaching them great dental habits early in life.

Babies and Toddlers

It's never too early to think about dental health. Even before your child's baby teeth emerge, you can take proactive steps.

- Wipe gums with a warm, soft cloth.
- Clean new baby teeth and gums at least once a day and especially before bedtime.
- Avoid giving juice in bottles. Milk and juice contain sugars that can lead to tooth decay. If your child goes to bed with a bottle, fill it with water instead of juice or milk.
- Serve water treated with fluoride, which is added to most U.S. public drinking water.

Thumb sucking and pacifier use generally abates naturally between ages two and four. Before permanent teeth begin to

come in, the proper growth of the mouth and alignment of the teeth can be negatively impacted by these behaviors. For tips on how to help your child give up thumb sucking or pacifier use, visit the American Dental Association online at www.mouthhealthy.org/en/az-topics/t/thumbsucking.

Youth

Applying Sealants

After your child's permanent molars come in, speak with your dentist about applying dental sealants. A sealant is a plastic material that is painted onto the chewing surfaces of molars to prevent cavities. After the material hardens, the patient will not feel the sealant. The process is simple, pain-free and a benefit for TRICARE beneficiaries.

Using Mouth Guards

Using a mouth guard reduces the risk of dental injury during competitive and recreational sports. Dental injuries to the teeth, jaw and mouth can occur regardless of whether the play is at the competitive or recreational level. Speak to your dentist about fitting your child with an athletic mouth guard.

To learn more about youth and dental health, visit the American Dental Association's Mouth Healthy Kids at www.mouthhealthykids.org/en.

Teens

Nighttime Teeth Grinding

Nighttime teeth grinding and clenching can cause tooth pain, jaw soreness and even fractures in teeth. Signs include a teen complaining of a tender jaw or dull headache. You may even hear your teen grinding their teeth in their sleep. These events signal that it is time to speak with your dentist, who may fit your teen with an occlusal guard to wear during sleep.

To learn more about teen dental health, visit the American Dental Association's Mouth Healthy at www.mouthhealthy.org/en/teens. ★



TRICARE Dental Program Preventive Benefits for Babies, Youth and Teens

TRICARE Dental Programs (TDP) covers benefits to help ensure a great start to oral health for children. This includes regular checkups, teeth cleaning, fluoride treatments and sealants. With consistent preventive care, you can also help your child avoid compounding, more serious dental issues that may require the use of general anesthesia.

Here are some highlights of the preventive benefits for children under the TDP:

- Automatic enrollment of family members at age one.
- Two exams and two cleanings in a consecutive 12-month period. These visits include teeth cleaning, fluoride treatments and polishing. They may also include X-rays, sealants and other preventive services.
- Sealants on permanent molars through age 18.

- Teeth grinding and athletic mouth guards in teens age 13 and older, with applicable cost-shares. Mouth guards are limited to one per beneficiary per 12-month period.
- Space maintainers for molars and back (posterior) teeth are fully covered under age 19.

Go to www.tricare.mil/tdp or www.uccitdp.com for more information on TDP-covered services. ★

**TRICARE DENTAL PROGRAMS COVERS
BENEFITS TO HELP ENSURE A GREAT
START TO ORAL HEALTH FOR CHILDREN.**



Oral Cancer 101

Oral cavity and oropharynx cancers are cancers that occur anywhere in the mouth, on the lips or in the throat. These cancers may first appear as a tender spot or a sore that doesn't get better within two weeks. Like all types of cancer, early detection is key and often allows for more treatment options.

Signs and Symptoms

If you notice any of the following symptoms, see your doctor or dentist.

- A sore in the mouth that does not heal
- Pain in the mouth that doesn't go away
- A lump or thickening in the cheek
- A white or red patch on the gums, tongue, tonsil or lining of the mouth
- A sore throat or a feeling that something is caught in the throat that doesn't go away
- Trouble chewing or swallowing
- Trouble moving the jaw or tongue
- Numbness of the tongue or other area of the mouth
- A lump or mass in the neck

- Loosening of the teeth or pain around the teeth or jaw
- Swelling of the jaw that causes dentures to fit poorly or become uncomfortable
- Voice changes
- Weight loss
- Constant bad breath

Source: American Cancer Society, www.cancer.org/cancer/oral-cavity-and-oropharyngeal-cancer/detection-diagnosis-staging/signs-symptoms.html

Risk factors

Tobacco use and alcohol are the biggest risk factors contributing to oral and oropharynx cancers. In fact, according to the American Cancer Society, seven out of 10 people diagnosed with these cancers are heavy alcohol users and most use tobacco products. People with the Human papillomavirus are also at increased risk for developing oral cancer. Cancers of the lips often occur due to sun damage from UV rays (sunlight).

These statistics don't exempt people without risk factors. Over 25 percent of all oral cancers occur in people who don't

smoke or drink more than occasionally. Age and gender are another factor in developing oral cancer. Men are twice as likely as women to develop it; men over the age of 55 are particularly at risk.

Source: www.cancer.org/cancer/oral-cavity-and-oropharyngeal-cancer/causes-risks-prevention/risk-factors.html

What can You do to Prevent Oral Cancer?

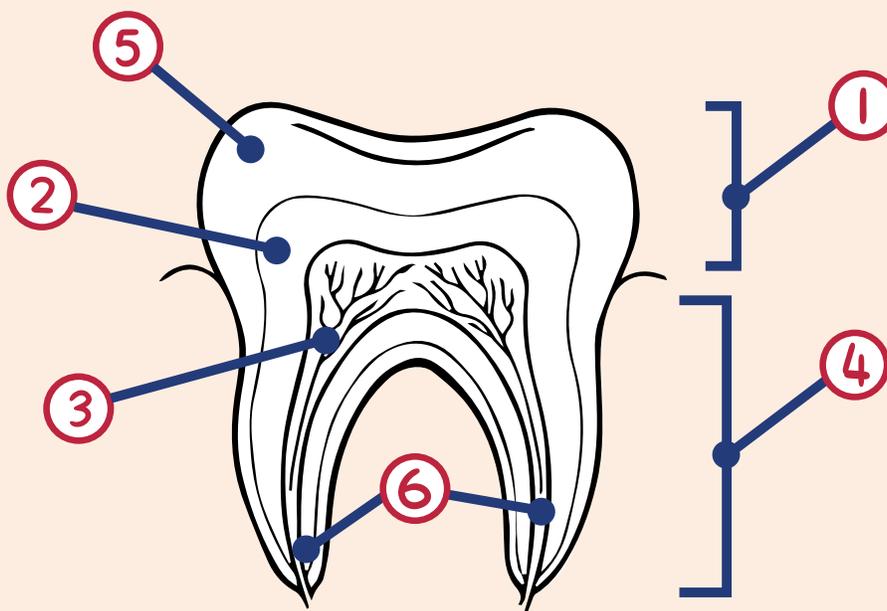
The best way to prevent oral cancer is to minimize risk factors that you control. Quitting tobacco use is a difficult but worthwhile endeavor. TRICARE can help you quit with the tools found at www.tricare.mil/tobacco cessation. You'll find information about medication; a toll-free, 24-hour quit line; counseling; web-based education; and live chatting with a tobacco cessation counselor. An additional resource is <https://tricare.mil/UCanQuit2>.

Oral Cavity and Pharyngeal Cancer Exam Coverage

The TRICARE Dental Program covers a complete oral cavity examination as part of routine preventive care for adults at high risk due to exposure to tobacco or excessive amounts of alcohol. ★



Anatomy of a Tooth



Write the correct number next to the name of each part of the tooth!

- | | |
|--------------|--------------------------------|
| _____ Enamel | _____ Crown |
| _____ Pulp | _____ Nerves and Blood Vessels |
| _____ Root | _____ Dentin |

TRICARE TOOTH TIP

Brushing your teeth makes you shine!

Answers:
 5 Enamel
 3 Pulp
 4 Root
 1 Crown
 6 Nerves and Blood Vessels
 2 Dentin



HEALTH MATTERS

United Concordia Companies, Inc.
 TRICARE Dental Program
 P.O. Box 69450
 Harrisburg, PA 17106

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CHECK THIS OUT...

Give your children a head start to lifelong dental health.

See Page 4.

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Dental Terminology 101

Common dental terms aren't always familiar to dental patients. Communicating with and understanding your dentist is critical. The following chart lists definitions of dental terms and the benefit of these treatments on your oral health. ★

TERM	DEFINITION	HEALTH BENEFIT
Sealants	A plastic coating for molars that seals off the grooves of a tooth and helps prevent bacteria and plaque from getting in and causing decay	Helps prevent tooth decay
Bridge	A dental prosthesis that replaces one or more lost or missing teeth being supported and held in position by attachments to adjacent teeth	Restores chewing, speaking and/or appearance by replacing one or more missing teeth
Filling	Material (usually white or silver in color) that is applied to a cavity to help repair decay on an individual tooth and restore it to its previous form and function	Restores decayed teeth; insulates them from extreme hot and cold
Crown (Cap)	A covering cemented onto an existing tooth to restore the visible part of the tooth's shape and/or size	Strengthens tooth and improves appearance
Extraction	Removal of a tooth	Prevents crowding and/or spread of disease

TRICARE DENTAL PROGRAM RESOURCES

www.uccitdp.com

ENROLLMENT AND BILLING SERVICES

1-844-653-4061 (CONUS)

1-844-653-4060
 1-717-888-7400 (OCONUS)

711 (TDD/TTY)

CLAIMS FILING

CONUS:
 United Concordia
 TRICARE Dental Program
 P.O. Box 69451
 Harrisburg, PA 17106

OCONUS:
 United Concordia
 TRICARE Dental Program
 P.O. Box 69452
 Harrisburg, PA 17106

BENEFICIARY WEB ENROLLMENT

www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/bwe