

The *smilebuilderz* Standard of Care

We hold ourselves to the highest standards and are determined for each and every patient to receive the best care, especially in categories highlighted below, which are recommended by the American Dental Association and Department of Health. As a patient here, you are an active participant in your care and always have the right to discuss your treatment and ultimately accept or decline the recommended care. However, please note that depending on the type of care declined, the dental team may not be able to proceed with additional treatment. Please be sure to ask your dental care provider about any questions or concerns you may have!

➤ Medical Review

- Definition/Includes: A review of any medical conditions, medications, allergies, vital signs, oral habits and concerns.
- How it may appear on your insurance claim: Not applicable – part of the exam code

➤ X-Rays (as needed)

- Definition/Includes: Our doctors typically request annual bitewings (“check up” films) to check in between teeth for cavities and examine bone levels. Additional films such as periapicals may be required if there are existing root canals, implants, or concerns of pain, lesions, or defects. Larger films, just as a Panoramic film or FMX (Full Mouth X-rays) are taken at your first visit and every 3-5 years thereafter to check tooth and jaw development, bony lesions, fractures, and the temporomandibular joint.
- How it may appear on your insurance claim:
 - D0270, D0271, D0272, or D0274 (bitewings)
 - D0220/D0230 (periapicals)
 - D0330 (panoramic)
 - D0210 (FMX)

➤ Intra-oral pictures

- Definition/Includes: These are photographs taken with an intra-oral camera of individual teeth or of the overall smile/bite to support the need for certain types of treatment and helping receive payment from insurance companies. Photographs also aid in documentation of changes in lesions, progress of care, and provide visuals for education or areas of concern.
- How it may appear on your insurance claim: Not applicable – part of the exam code

➤ Periodontal Charting (annual over 21yrs)

- Definition/Includes: This procedure measures your gum and bone health by checking the depth of pockets – the space between your gum tissue and tooth. The further your gum tissue has detached from your tooth, the deeper the pocket will be. Deep pockets indicate the loss of supporting bone (periodontal disease), which can eventually cause the loss of teeth. As a standard, we perform a full 6-point probing on each tooth, measure recession (root exposure), and document any gingivitis (bleeding) annually on

adults 21 years and older. Younger patients are typically spot-checked, and if there is a concern that warrants a full periodontal chart, it would be performed immediately.

- How it may appear on your insurance claim: Not applicable – part of the exam code

➤ Periodic Examination

- Definition/Includes: The dentist will evaluate the state of your teeth, gums, tongue, and surrounding tissues, including an oral cancer screening. Each tooth and existing restorations will be evaluated as well, and the periodontal chart will be assessed alongside the x-rays for determination of any specialized care required for each unique patient. Your recommended treatment will then be explained and you will have an opportunity to discuss any questions or concerns with your provider.
- How it may appear on your insurance claim: D0120

➤ Cleaning (type determined by diagnosis)

- Definition/Includes: A **prophylaxis** is what many consider a “routine cleaning” and includes the removal of plaque (soft debris), calculus (tartar/hard debris), and stain along the crown of the tooth and gum line. It is considered *preventative* care and not meant to clean along roots or treat infection/disease outside of mild forms of gingivitis.

Scaling for moderate-severe gingivitis is a relatively new code released by the ADA and approved by the DOH where there is inflammation, bleeding and infection of the gums (gingivitis) in more than 30% of the mouth and requires a more in-depth cleaning. This cleaning type is considered *therapeutic*, more detailed, and a treatment for infection that is more widespread but does not exhibit any bone loss.

Once there is evidence of bone loss, you may be referred for a **periodontal scaling and root planing (SRP)**, requiring separate appointments to address a more serious and progressive infection. However, after treatment for SRP has been completed, you would be seen more regularly for **periodontal maintenance** for the remaining life of your teeth. This is also considered a *therapeutic* form of care, where there is still removal of plaque and calculus, but also possible site-specific scaling and root planing, irrigation, and polishing as needed, with an increased frequency of visits to prevent a relapse in disease.

- How it may appear on your insurance claim:
 - D1110 (Adult prophylaxis – mixed & adult teeth)
 - D1120 (Child prophylaxis – primary teeth)
 - D4346 (Scaling in presence of generalized moderate or severe gingivitis)
 - D4910 (Periodontal Maintenance)

➤ Caries Risk Assessment

- Definition/Includes: This is an evidence-based evaluation of multiple categories (medical, behavioral, social, etc) to identify risks affiliated with increased likelihood of dental decay. It is then utilized as a way to customize recommendations to aid in the reduction of overall risk and actively work toward preventative care. If you are found to be higher risk, your provider may suggest various options such as additional cleaning

appointments, dietary shifts, supplemental fluoride, or specific supplies like an electric toothbrush during the oral hygiene instruction portion of your appointment.

- How it may appear on your insurance claim: D0601 – D0603

**If this is not covered by your insurance, any outstanding balance will be written off so that you will not owe any fee for this service.*

➤ Oral Hygiene Instruction

- Definition/Includes: This information is provided during your visit on various topics ranging from detailed brushing and flossing technique to providing visuals about areas that require additional attention. Recommendations of specific/specialized dental aids and their usage would be explained at this time as well, such as specialized care for bridges, implants, crowns, and other restorations.

- How it may appear on your insurance claim: D1330

**If this is not covered by your insurance, any outstanding balance will be written off so that you will not owe any fee for this service.*

➤ Nutritional Counseling

- Definition/Includes: This procedure discusses various oral conditions such as recurrent decay, xerostomia (dry mouth), periodontal disease, acid erosion, and other oral lesions and how bacteria and daily pH levels can be affected by dietary selections. An example would be discussing if a patient consumes soda, tea, wine, or frequently snacks and the implications for oral health, in the hopes of alleviating current or preventing future disease. This is routinely discussed after completing Caries Risk Assessment and in conjunction with Oral Hygiene Instruction.

- How it may appear on your insurance claim: D1310

**If this is not covered by your insurance, any outstanding balance will be written off so that you will not owe any fee for this service.*

➤ Tobacco Counseling (if applicable)

- Definition/Includes: If you currently utilize a form of tobacco (cigarettes, cigars, hookah, e-cigs, etc), or use various nicotine/inhalant delivery systems (such as vaping), our providers are required to speak with you regarding the options available to you that can assist with cessation. Our goal is to provide our patients with the best tools available to improve their oral and overall health, and so you will be provided a sheet with contact information to the PA FREE Quitline (1-800-QUIT-NOW), where there are various forms of free services available.

- How it may appear on your insurance claim: D1320

**If this is not covered by your insurance, any outstanding balance will be written off so that you will not owe any fee for this service.*

➤ Sealants (as recommended)

- Definition/Includes: Sealants are a protective coating that can be placed on the chewing surfaces and grooves of teeth. It's a simple procedure that can be done during your hygiene visit, and they have been shown to reduce cavities on occlusal (chewing)

surfaces by up to 80%! They are typically recommended by default for children as a preventative measure while the adult teeth erupt because kids are still learning proper homecare, oral hygiene technique, and genetically some grooves are microscopically too deep to clean with a standard toothbrush – they need the extra protection. However, adults can benefit from sealants too! We go through cycles or phases where our bodies may become more susceptible to decay, so utilizing sealants as an adult for preventative measure is also a possibility to discuss with your provider. The longevity of sealants vary, as wear and tear is unique to each individual, but as a rule they should stay on the teeth for a bare minimum of 2 years. Many times, we see patients who have had sealants last 10, 20, and even 30 years!

- How it may appear on your insurance claim: D1351

➤ Fluoride

- Definition/Includes: Fluoride, a natural mineral found in rocks and soil, can come in many forms, but our offices typically will recommend a varnish be placed at your routine visits. Varnish currently has the highest uptake and effectiveness, adhering immediately to the tooth structure and allowing high amounts of calcium and phosphorus to penetrate and strengthen the tooth structure. It not only helps with prevention of cavities, but also can desensitize highly reactive and sensitive teeth. For children in areas without water fluoridation and not currently receiving any form of fluoride, your dentist may separately prescribe fluoride tablets (levels are specific to your child's age), which can help with the development of teeth still in the jawbone and result in stronger, more resilient dentition throughout the life of the patient. Fun fact: community water fluoridation has been hailed as one of the top 10 great public health achievements of the 20th century!
- How it may appear on your insurance claim: D1206