



OP-ENS Newsletter

Our Peers – Empowerment and Navigational Supports

Dental Care & People with Physical Disabilities

Your physical health is important, and that includes your oral, or mouth, care too!

This month's newsletter is full of information about ways to promote your oral health through dental care. Dental visits are important because they help protect your teeth and find problems that can be treated easier and more affordably. Visiting a dentist may help prevent oral conditions from developing.

Some people with physical disabilities have limited access to dental care due to accessibility, insurance, attitudes, and other factors. As a result, some people with disabilities may have poorer oral health.

Here are some guidelines and suggestions for promoting your dental care.

People with disabilities are **10%** less likely than their nondisabled peers to visit the dentist every year

QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN MAKING A DENTIST APPOINTMENT:



- What is the best way for me to communicate my access needs?
- Is the equipment accessible? If not, what is the dentist's plan?
- What is the safe transfer policy?
- What are alternative payment methods if my insurance does not cover the full appointment?

Oral (mouth) health is important to manage as it can change with different medical conditions



American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry



Program for Healthcare Justice for People with Disabilities

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Did you know?

The Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD) offers job training and placement referrals through a community partner network.

Job seekers with disabilities are referred by MOPD's Employment Services staff to community-based organizations, WIPA Program Partners, and SSA Employment Network agencies for job training and placement assistance including:

- Resume writing
- Job readiness training and preparation
- Employer connection for job openings
- One-on-one counseling to assess skills, identify barriers to employment, and advise on issues related to health care and state/federal benefits.

For more information contact the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities at 312-744-7050 or www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/mopd.html

Dental Care

How can I keep up with my oral health?

The American Dental Association recommends that you:

- Brush your teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste
- Clean between your teeth daily
- Eat a healthy diet that limits sugary drinks and snacks
- See a dentist at least once a year



How should I prepare to call my Medicaid health plan for dental care?

We recommend you:

- Have your member or subscriber number that is on your health plan card with you
- Be prepared to give your birth date
- Find out if you are calling for either:
 - Eligibility
 - Benefits
 - Claims
 - Finding a dentist

What are some signs you should see a dentist?

While you should see a dentist regularly, here are some signs that you should see a dentist:

- Your teeth are sensitive to the cold or heat
- Your gums are puffy or they bleed when you brush or floss
- You have fillings, crowns, dental implants, or dentures
- You have persistent bad breath or have a bad taste in your mouth
- You have a medical condition such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, eating disorders, or are HIV positive
- Your mouth is often dry
- You smoke or use other tobacco products



What are my rights in terms of dental care?

You have a right to:

- Be treated with respect
- Receive needed dental services
- Privacy and confidentiality, as stated by law
- Receive information about your dental healthcare and treatment options
- Help make choices about your dental care



Where can I file a complaint?

As a Medicaid beneficiary, you can file a complaint by calling:

- DentaQuest at 1-888-286-2447 or TTY 1-800-466-7566
- Healthcare and Family Services Health Benefits Hotline at 1-800-226-0768