

**CHILDREN MAY QUALIFY FOR MORE DENTAL CARE THAN YOU THINK**

**Dental Services for Children and Youth**

This information is for children and young people who have Medi-Cal (and for parents of children who have Medi-Cal). If you have Medi-Cal and you are under the age of 21, you are eligible to get services that adults cannot get, called "EPSDT services." These services are free.

**What are Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) services?**

EPSDT services are extra Medi-Cal services. You can get them in addition to regular Medi-Cal services. You do not have to apply for EPSDT services. If you have Medi-Cal, you qualify for EPSDT automatically. EPSDT services include dental care and treatment to fix or improve dental problems that your dentist finds.

**I have Medi-Cal and I am under 21. What dental services does EPSDT provide?**

Through EPSDT, you can get any dental care that your dentist thinks you need, including services to prevent future dental problems, to fix dental problems that you have now, to provide emergency dental care, and to provide orthodonture care (like braces). You can get dental services that are not covered for adults over the age of 20. You can get dental services that are not in your dentist's Denti-Cal Manual. These services are free under EPSDT.

**What if my dentist says the services are not covered by Denti-Cal?**

Ask your dentist to submit a request to Denti-Cal (called a "Treatment Authorization Request" (TAR) form) and write "request for EPSDT services" on the TAR. Your dentist will not know if the services are covered until he or she asks Denti-Cal. Do not agree to pay for any services yourself!

### **Is there anything else my dentist must do?**

Yes, your dentist must tell Denti-Cal why the services you need are necessary for you. Your dentist must tell Denti-Cal:

- what services you need,
- what your dental history, diagnosis and prognosis are,
- why you need the services,
- how the services will help you,
- how long you will need the dental services.

If you need dental services because of a medical condition, your dentist should attach a letter from your doctor or therapist explaining why the dental services will help you.

### **What if Denti-Cal denies the services?**

You have the right to ask for a hearing (also called an "appeal") within 90 days of the denial. Contact a free legal services provider for help.

- San Mateo: Legal Aid Society of San Mateo County—Health Consumer Center: (800) 381-8898 or (650) 558-0915.
- Santa Clara: Bay Area Legal Aid: (408) 850-7066.
- Other Bay Area Counties: Bay Area Legal Aid—Legal Advice Line: (800) 551-5554.

### **What if I only have restricted Medi-Cal (for emergency and pregnancy services only)?**

You cannot receive EPSDT services if you have Medi-Cal only for emergencies. But you can get dental screenings under another program called CHDP. To apply for CHDP, call 650- 573-2877 (San Mateo) or 408-494-7410 (Santa Clara). Also, if you are pregnant you can receive certain dental services through pregnancy Medi-Cal. If you have trouble getting dental services while you are pregnant, call your local Health Consumer Center or free legal services provider for help. You may also be able to get full health insurance coverage, including dental benefits, through your county's Healthy Kids program. Contact 650-573-3595 (San Mateo) or 888-244-5222 (Santa Clara).

### **Can I get EPSDT if I have a Medi-Cal share-of-cost?**

Yes, once you meet your monthly share-of-cost you can get EPSDT services that month.

Dear Dentist,

This letter explains how I can get the dental services I need, even if they are not in the Denti-Cal Manual.

### **What Services I Can Receive Under EPSDT**

I am a child under the age of 21. Under federal law and California law, I have the right to get EPSDT services. Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) dental services are extra Denti-Cal services. I can get them in addition to regular Denti-Cal services. EPSDT services are available to correct or ameliorate dental problems that you identify, even if these services would not be authorized for an adult.

EPSDT dental services are any services necessary for:

- relief of pain and infections;
- restoration of teeth;
- maintenance of dental health.

*For example, I can get full cast crowns on posterior teeth, if necessary, even though they are not a benefit for adults ages 21 and older.*

*If medically necessary, I can get orthodontia even if I score below 26 points on the HLD Index and do not have one of the five automatic qualifying conditions.*

### **When are EPSDT Services Appropriate?**

In general, you must request EPSDT services for me if I need:

- A medically necessary dental procedure that is not listed in the current Manual of Criteria.
- A medically necessary dental procedure that is listed in the current Manual of Criteria but for which I do not meet the published criteria.
- A dental service more frequently than is currently allowed under Program criteria.

### **Obtaining EPSDT Services**

Please submit a Treatment Authorization Request (TAR) to Denti-Cal for the dental care I need. You must write "Evaluate under EPSDT Supplemental Services" in the Comment field on the TAR form. You must also explain the medical or dental necessity for the services, including:

- patient history
- diagnosis and prognosis
- medical or dental justification for the services requested including treatment goals and why a regular Denti-Cal service or lower-cost treatment are insufficient
- description of the benefit to the patient (this is important and should be very thorough)
- length of time the patient will need the services.

If Denti-Cal denies the TAR, I will have the right to appeal the denial.

**Please see the Denti-Cal Provider Bulletin, Volume 22, Number 34 (November/December 2006) for examples of all the services available under EPSDT.**

[http://www.denti-cal.ca.gov/provsrvcs/bulletins/Volume\\_22\\_Number\\_34.pdf](http://www.denti-cal.ca.gov/provsrvcs/bulletins/Volume_22_Number_34.pdf)

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[www.healthconsumer.org](http://www.healthconsumer.org)