

Exclusively for Dental Health Services Enrollees

TOOTH TIPS!

Preventive Vs. Diagnostic Care: What Do You Need to Know About the Differences

When selecting a dental plan, it's important to understand how different types of care are categorized, especially **preventive** and **diagnostic** care, as these are often covered differently under various plans.

Preventive Care

Definition: Preventive care focuses on maintaining oral health and preventing the onset of dental issues. It typically includes routine procedures to keep teeth and gums healthy.

Examples:

- Regular cleanings
- Fluoride treatments
- Dental sealants (in some cases)
- Routine oral exams

Coverage: Most dental plans fully cover preventive care with little to no out-of-pocket costs. These services are usually encouraged to reduce the risk of more costly treatments later.

Diagnostic Care

Definition: Diagnostic care is designed to identify dental issues early through evaluations and tests. These procedures help detect problems such as cavities, gum disease, or oral cancer before they become severe.

Examples:

- X-rays (bitewings, panoramic, or full-mouth)
- Comprehensive oral exams
- Periodic exams to assess dental health

Coverage: Diagnostic care is also often fully or partially covered, though some plans may have limits on how often specific diagnostic services, like X-rays, can be performed.

Key Differences (Why It Matters to You?)

1. Purpose:

- Preventive care is about maintaining health and preventing disease.
- Diagnostic care is about identifying existing or potential problems.

2. Frequency:

- Preventive services, such as cleanings, are often scheduled regularly (e.g., every six months).
- Diagnostic services may be needed less frequently or as determined by specific oral health needs.

3. Plan Coverage:

- Preventive care is more likely to be 100% covered to encourage consistent check-ups.
- Diagnostic care may involve some cost-sharing or be subject to plan limits.

Understanding these distinctions ensures you choose a plan that aligns with your oral health needs and budget.



Understanding your dental benefits plan is critical to maintaining good oral health and overall well-being.