

THE ORAL HEALTH EXPERT

DELTA DENTAL OF ARIZONA

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Dental Insurance Waiting Period Explained



A dental benefit waiting period is the amount of time after buying dental insurance that you must wait before you are eligible to receive benefits for treatment. Waiting periods differ from plan to plan, so it's a good idea to check your eligibility prior to scheduling a procedure. If you receive services during a waiting period, your dental coverage may not pay for them.

Types of Dental Insurance Waiting Periods

1. Employer waiting period: Employers that offer benefits may institute a waiting period ranging from a few days to a year. Check your coverage for details.
2. Pre-existing condition exclusion period: This is the period during which dental insurance will not pay for care related to a pre-existing condition. This is designed to avoid situations where an individual buys insurance solely to cover a major procedure or oral health condition learned of prior to enrollment.¹ This type of waiting period is typically applied only to more serious procedures and conditions.

Do All Dental Insurance Plans Have a Waiting Period?

No, not all dental insurance plans have a waiting period. DHMO plans commonly have waiting periods, whereas most dental discount plans usually do not. It is important to check with your dental insurance administrator to determine your applicable waiting periods.

When possible, remain enrolled in your current insurance plan until you purchase a new plan, and avoid a coverage gap of more than one month. In many cases, a waiting period can be waived if you recently had comparable coverage.

Always do your research, ask for detailed information about new dental coverage, and stay on top of your dental health so you can have a healthy smile for years to come.

The Truth About the Tooth Fairy



Lose a tooth. Place it under your pillow. Wake up in the morning and find a gift or money! It almost sounds too good to be true.

As long as the Tooth Fairy has been around—more than 100 years—this beloved character has sparked curiosity in the little ones who benefit from her generosity. Here are some common questions parents face about this winged wonder, along with tips on how you might answer them.

Q: I put my tooth under my pillow. Why didn't the Tooth Fairy come last night?

A: The Tooth Fairy visits so many children every night, that sometimes she needs an extra day. Her wings get tired. She'll be here tonight!

Q: What does she do with all of those teeth?

A: She uses them as bricks for her fairy castle.

Q: How does the Tooth Fairy know I lost a tooth?

A: A bell rings in her castle and she gets a message with your address every time you lose a tooth.

Q: What does the Tooth Fairy look like?

A: I've never seen her, but I've heard she's very tiny, has wings, carries a wand and sprinkles fairy dust. She wears a beautiful ball gown and ties her hair up in a bun. And she's always happy, so her healthy smile shows at all times.

Q: Is the Tooth Fairy real?

A: Oh, boy! That's the colossal question about this teeny tooth collector. Ask your own questions, such as, "Why do you ask?" or "What do you think?" Your child's answer may help you understand if they are looking for encouragement to keep believing. If it seems the child wants to believe, reinforce that belief. Let your child know that you believe in the magic of the Tooth Fairy.

When the subject of the Tooth Fairy comes up, take the opportunity to talk to your children about oral health. Tell them the Tooth Fairy wants them to take great care of their smiles. You can reinforce this by seeing to it that the next time the Tooth Fairy visits she leaves a toothbrush, toothpaste, sugar-free gum or a Tooth Fairy book about oral health.

SMILE STATS



The Tooth Fairy visits 84% of the nation's households with children.²



The script for the 2010 movie "The Tooth Fairy" was originally written in 1993 with Arnold Schwarzenegger slotted to play the Tooth Fairy.³



In South Africa, children put their lost teeth inside slippers at night, instead of under their pillows.⁴

10 Steps to Properly Brush Your Teeth



You know brushing your teeth is important, but how you go about doing so can make a big difference in your long-term oral health. If you fail to brush your teeth thoroughly and with a good technique, your teeth may look and feel clean, but layers of plaque will build up in hard-to-reach places and cause tooth decay.

Follow these ten steps to make sure you're covering every tooth surface above and below the gumline:

Step 1: Wet your toothbrush and apply a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste.

Step 2: Direct your toothbrush at a 45-degree angle towards the gum line and using gentle pressure, move your toothbrush in a circular motion to clean the outer surface of each tooth.

Step 3: Be sure to also clean gently under the gumline of each tooth. If you're using an electric toothbrush, apply less pressure to avoid irritating your gums or harming your enamel.

Step 4: Repeat the same circular motion on the inside of all teeth; don't forget to reach behind your back molars.

Step 5: Clean the chewing surfaces of your teeth by scrubbing with a gentle back-and-forth motion.

Step 6: Clean your front teeth by turning your toothbrush vertically and using the tip in an up-and-down sweeping motion, both in front of and behind each tooth.

Step 7: Carefully and gently brush the entire top of your tongue to freshen your breath and remove any remaining food particles.

Step 8: Spit out any excess toothpaste and rinse gently with water—or not at all (at least not right away). Rinsing removes the toothpaste's fluoride, which helps protect teeth. It's most effective to wait at least 30 minutes before rinsing, eating or drinking.⁵

Step 9: If you use a non-fluoride-containing mouthwash, use at a different time than when you brush your teeth (such as after lunch) to avoid rinsing away the fluoride from your toothpaste. If you use a fluoride mouth rinse, you can use it right after brushing.

Step 10: Rinse off your toothbrush and store it upright in a clean, dry place. Replace your toothbrush every 3-4 months, or as soon as the bristles begin to bend or fray.

Besides brushing your teeth twice a day, be sure to schedule regular dental exams and professional cleanings with your dentist. Your dentist or dental hygienist can demonstrate how to properly brush your teeth, especially if you have implants, braces or if you've had a recent procedure that needs special care.

MOUTH-HEALTHY RECIPE: WHOLE-WHEAT BLUEBERRY MUFFINS

Ingredients:

- ½ cup lightly packed light brown sugar
- 1 Tbsp. baking powder
- ½ tsp. ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp. kosher salt
- 1 ½ cups plus 1 Tbsp. whole-wheat flour
- 1 cup nonfat milk
- ¼ cup melted and cooled unsalted butter
- 2 large eggs
- 2 tsp. pure vanilla extract
- 1 cup fresh or frozen blueberries

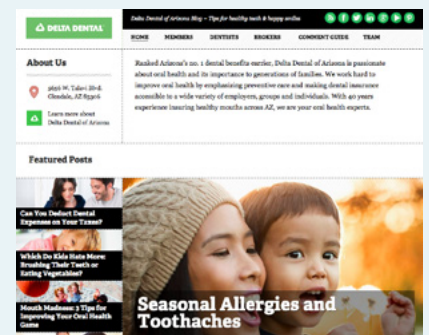
Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 400 F. Lightly coat a muffin tin with nonstick spray or line with paper liners.
2. In a large bowl, mix brown sugar, baking powder, cinnamon, salt and 2 cups flour.
3. In a separate bowl, whisk milk, butter, eggs and vanilla.
4. Make a well in the center of dry ingredients, add wet ingredients to the well, then stir until blended.
5. Toss blueberries with the remaining tablespoon flour, then fold into batter.
6. Divide the batter among the muffin cups. Bake for 18 to 20 minutes or until golden brown.
7. Remove from oven and let cool in the pan for 10 minutes.

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SOURCES

¹<https://www.healthcare.gov/glossary/pre-existing-condition-exclusion-period-job-based-coverage/>

²The Original Tooth Fairy Poll was conducted December 13-28, 2017, among a nationally representative sample of 1,007 parents of children ages 6-12. The margin of error is +/- 3.1 percent.

³<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0808510/trivia>

⁴<https://www.mentalfloss.com/article/58503/7-tooth-fairy-traditions-around-world>

⁵<https://www.dentalhealth.org/news/spit-dont-rinse-for-better-oral-health>