

# Healthy smiles less likely to need fluoride treatments

Fluoride is important—it reinforces your teeth and makes them more resistant to cavities. That's why many people get fluoride treatment when they go the dentist. However, your need for additional fluoride depends on your risk level for tooth decay. And many people are at low risk for cavities, thanks in part to fluoridated water and toothpaste and to better oral hygiene.

In fact, a number of studies report fewer children have cavities in their permanent teeth. One study of children aged 18 years and younger in the United States found that, since the 1970s, the total number of carious primary and permanent teeth, both treated and untreated, has declined substantially<sup>1</sup>. As a result, they're likely to derive little benefit from professional fluoride treatment.

Today, numerous studies and recommendations from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggest that fluoride should be provided selectively to people who need it instead of being provided routinely to everyone.

As the leader in dental benefits, Delta Dental closely monitors and assesses scientific research. That way, as we work to promote oral health, we can offer updates to plan designs that are based on evidence.

Based on this information, your employer has opted to limit the coverage of topical fluoride treatment provided by your Delta Dental plan to once per year for enrollees up to age 14. Those who desire additional fluoride treatment may receive them at their own expense.

Talk to your dentist about your risk for cavities. He or she can help you determine the most appropriate treatment based on your health and history.

<sup>1</sup> Brown LJ, Wall TP, Lazar V. Trends in total caries experience: permanent and primary teeth. J Am Dent Assoc. 2000 Feb;131(2):223-31.

