



## Dental Connections



When we speak of chronic disease states, conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, and hypertension come to mind. How often do we consider Alzheimer's disease (AD) in this category? According to the Alzheimer's Association, AD comes in 6<sup>th</sup> place as the leading cause of disease in the U.S. Nearly 6 million Americans suffer with this disease, and the estimates for 2050 jump to 14 million. In addition, between 2000 and 2017, heart disease as a cause of death has dipped by 9% while AD has increased by 145%.

The good news is that we can make a difference!

AD has several inflammatory components that include increased levels of pro-inflammatory cytokines, which promote the state of inflammation in the CNS. Periodontitis (PD) is also an inflammatory disease that initiates the inflammatory cascade as well increases the levels of c-reactive proteins in the body. The commonality between PD and AD is inflammation. Research for a cure is constant and ongoing. To date, drug trials using anti-amyloid drugs have not proven successful.

Recent experiments on a multinational level have demonstrated how *Porphyromonas Gingivalis* may influence the development of AD. These experiments that use mouse models have exhibited how *P. Gingivalis* infiltrates the brain and causes an increase in key amyloid plaques (alpha beta 1-42) that have been associated with AD. In addition, all the signs of AD can be reproduced in mice by simply injecting *P. Gingivalis* in their oral cavities. Studies of the CSF in patients with AD have shown evidence of *P. Gingivalis* DNA. This same observation has been demonstrated in the CSF of postmortem patients. Who knows more about keeping *P. Gingivalis* controlled than we do?

AD is a very complex disease, and more research is warranted prior to implicating PD as a causative factor of AD. Currently, we are well versed that reducing the load of *P. Gingivalis* in the mouth is always a benefit to all of our patients. As we learn more about the oral systemic connection and have more discussions with our patients on this topic, perhaps the message that oral health and bacterial load play key factors in our overall health will continue to grow.

Please consider promoting more discussion with your staff as well as your patients about this important connection. As always, thank you for your participation in our BCBSRI network as well as for providing great care to our members.

Dr. Yvonne M. Wolny, Blue Cross Dental Director

Sources: 1. [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org) 2. Gum disease strongly implicated in Alzheimer's: Science Advances. January 23, 2019 3. Alzheimer's Association International Conference (AAIC) 2019 4. Association between Periodontitis and Alzheimer's disease. *N Am J Med Sci* 2015 Jun; 7(6): 241-246

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## Avoiding Claims Rejections and Denials

Approximately 80% of our dental claims are submitted electronically by providers. Of those electronic claims, more than half are automatically approved or denied within seconds of entering the claim processing system. Here are a few helpful hints on submitting electronic claims:

1. Make sure you keep your National Provider Identifiers (NPI) and Tax Identification Numbers (TIN) updated. If your NPIs aren't properly loaded to our provider database, it can cause a claim rejection or it can cause the claim to pay or deny incorrectly. (See Credentialing/Recredentialing/Practice Changes later in this issue.)
2. Make sure you have *all* the patient and subscriber information correctly entered in the claim. If you leave out any information, you risk a claim rejection. The information is needed to match the patient and subscriber information on the claim with the information in our records.
3. [Watch this video series](#) and learn how to avoid common issues that create denials. This video series could be a huge time and effort saver for you:
  - Single Crown, Onlay, Buildup and Post & Core Claims
  - Scaling and Root Planing Claims
  - Claim Submission Guideline Tips
  - Electronic Claim Submission Tips
  - Soft Tissue Grafts
  - Bridges
  - Coordination of Benefits

If you experience difficulty using the [provider portal](#) or have questions about submitting electronic claims, please call our claims processing partner, United Concordia Dental's Dental Electronic Service team, at 1-800-633-5430, option 4, Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Eastern time.

## Electronic Attachments – Helpful Hints

Consider using the following helpful hints when submitting electronic claim attachments.

- Only electronic attachments will be accepted with the submission of electronic claims. Claim forms and corresponding attachments must be entirely electronic or entirely paper for each submission. Mixed submissions and paper claims with electronic attachment numbers included in the notes will be rejected.
- Ensure that one of the following attachment types has been selected.
  - i. **Radiograph (X-ray)**
  - ii. **Periodontal chart** (Select this option unless X-rays are also included.)
  - iii. **Explanation of Benefits** (Select this option only when an EOB is attached without other documentation.)
  - iv. **Support Data for Claim** (Select only when other attachment types do not apply, as this option can delay processing due to additional review requirements.)

If multiple types of attachments are included and at least one of the attachments is an X-ray, choose Radiograph (X-ray) as the attachment type.

- Confirm that all attachments are complete, clear, and easy to read prior to submission. Attachments that do not fit this criteria risk rejection and will require additional information.

## Submit Predeterminations Online

The provider portal is the easiest, fastest, and most secure way to finalize a predetermination to guarantee payment within the current cycle. If you are still completing and mailing the paper form, try the online option today! To do so, simply log on to the [Dental Provider Resources site](#). Select Add Date of Service to a Predetermination (located on the Claims tile). Enter the predetermination claim number and date of service to complete the process.

## Electronic Funds Transfer

Some of you remember when payroll direct deposits first started. There was a fear of change in the beginning, but eventually employees realized how convenient it was. They saw the successful electronic transfer of funds and the record of the deposit on the bank account statement every pay period. As a result, many companies no longer offer paper checks for payroll, and many employees have never known anything but direct deposit of their paycheck.

A similar movement is happening with payments of dental claims. Electronic funds transfer (EFT) is the same as a direct deposit. It is simply electronically moving money from one bank account to another, which has been used successfully for decades. In the past, the dental industry has been slow to move to the EFT for payments of claims. However, that trend is changing, and we encourage you to register now and start embracing the technology that will help you manage your cash flow and time.

### Benefits of EFT:

- Receive payments even when out of the office for vacations, conferences, etc.
- Deposits don't require someone going to the bank.
- Save time.
  - View electronic records online and printed if needed.
- Worry less. There are no lost or stolen checks.

Sign up for EFT today. Visit the [provider portal](#) and follow the instructions below:

1. Select the Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) link.
2. Log in with your existing username and password (or use the Create an Account link to create one).
3. Click the Request PIN link.
4. For security reasons, the PIN will be mailed to your office mailing address as listed in our system within 7 to 10 days.
5. Upon receipt of the PIN, log in to our website and enter the PIN into the system before it expires.
6. Now you can enter your bank account information for your practice, group, and/or individuals that bill claims. Upon completion of this step, you will start receiving your payments electronically in the next payment cycle for which you have a claim to be paid.

## IN EVERY ISSUE

### Dental Provider Resources

When we have updates to share with your office, we will send them right to your inbox. However, to view past updates, our dental treatment guidelines, and previous editions of *Dental Connections*, please visit our [Dental Provider Resources page](#). Bookmark this page in your browser. You also will find contact information in one convenient location.

If you would like to add anyone in your office to our email list so they can receive our updates and *Dental Connections* too, you can do that [here](#).

### Credentialing/Recredentialing/Practice Changes

As a reminder, BCBSRI maintains the Rhode Island participating provider database. Our claims processing and customer service partner, United Concordia Dental, does not update Rhode Island provider practice information. If a provider who already participates with Blue Cross Dental joins your practice, or your practice information is changing, simply provide us with a completed [Practitioner Change Form](#), along with a W-9, indicating the new office location. Fax the information to (401) 459-2099 or email [provdb@bcbsri.org](mailto:provdb@bcbsri.org).

We always welcome new dentists to our network who deliver outstanding care to our members. If a dentist would like to participate with Blue Cross Dental, please visit the [Become a Participating Provider](#) page on [bcbsri.com](http://bcbsri.com) and fill out the required fields to initiate the credentialing process.

### Your Blue Store<sup>SM</sup> Upcoming Events

All three Your Blue Store locations—East Providence, Lincoln, and Warwick—offer our members a convenient, face-to-face way to get the same great service we're known for. That includes helping members when they contact United Concordia Dental for assistance, among many other services.

Our local team is happy to help in English, Spanish, or (at our East Providence store) Portuguese. Available services include:

- Sales of medical, dental, vision, and travel health insurance
- Customer service to help answer questions for all members
- Payment of premiums (cash, check, or money orders)
- Visits with our on-site nurse for help with ongoing health conditions
- Free exercise classes and educational sessions

For a complete listing of events, visit the [Your Blue Store](#) page.

Here are some upcoming Your Blue Store highlights:

**September 3, 12:00 p.m.** East Providence **Tai Chi** (Members Only)

**September 4, 12:00 p.m.** Lincoln **Basic Cardio Kickbox** (Members Only)

**September 4, 12:00 p.m.** Warwick **Zumba** (Members Only)

## Blue Cross Dental Contact Information

**Claims submission address:**

Dental Claims Administrator  
P.O. Box 69427  
Harrisburg, PA 17106-9427

**Claims submission address for FEP:**

Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island  
500 Exchange Street  
Providence, RI 02903

**Dental Director:** Yvonne M. Wolny, DMD, (401) 459-2036

**For claims, eligibility, and benefits:**

Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.  
(401) 453-4700  
Outside of Rhode Island: 1-800-831-2400

**For FEP claims, eligibility, and benefits:**

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday: 8:15 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; Tuesday: 9:15 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
(401) 831-0153  
Outside of RI: 1-800-377-4418

**For provider/network support:**

BCBSRI Provider Relations: 1-844-707-5627 or [ProviderRelations@bcbsri.org](mailto:ProviderRelations@bcbsri.org)

**For member enrollment:**

(401) 459-5550 or 1-855-690-2583

You may also direct your patients who need service to Your Blue Store<sup>SM</sup> locations Monday through Friday, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.:

**East Providence** – Highland Commons, 71 Highland Avenue

**Lincoln** – Lincoln Mall Shopping Center, 622 George Washington Highway

**Warwick** – Cowesett Corners, 300 Quaker Lane

**Your Blue Store main line:** (401) 459-2200

**Your Blue Store website:** [www.bcbsri.com/yourbluestore](http://www.bcbsri.com/yourbluestore)



500 Exchange Street, Providence, RI 02903-2699

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