



# Dental Clinical Policy

**Subject:** Caries Arresting Medicament  
Medicament Application

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**Status:** Revised

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## Description

This document addresses the application of an caries arresting medicament. One common medicament in use is silver diamine fluoride (SDF).

The plan performs review of caries arresting medicament application due to contractual requirements that necessitate benefits for dental services meet specific contract requirements. For example, plan contract(s) may require the provision of benefits for services that meet generally accepted standards of dental care at the lowest cost that properly addresses the patient's condition. The conclusion that a particular service is medically or dentally necessary and/or appropriate does not constitute an indication and/or warranty that the service requested is a covered benefit payable by the dental plan.

## Clinical Indications

Caries arresting medicament application is the conservative treatment of an active, non- symptomatic carious lesion by topical application of a caries arresting or inhibiting medicament and without mechanical removal of sound tooth structure.

Dental review as it applies to accepted standards of care means dental services that a Dentist, exercising prudent clinical judgment, provides to a patient for the purpose of evaluating, diagnosing or treating a dental injury or disease or its symptoms, and that are: in accordance with the generally accepted standards of dental practice; in terms of type, frequency and extent and is considered effective for the patient's dental injury or disease; and is not primarily performed for the convenience of the patient or Dentist, is not cosmetic and is not more costly than an alternative service.

For dental purposes, "generally accepted standards of dental practice" means:

- Standards that are based on credible scientific evidence published in peer-reviewed, dental literature generally recognized by the practicing dental community
- Specialty society recommendations/criteria
- The views of recognized dentists practicing in the relevant clinical area
- Any other relevant factors from credible sources

## Criteria

1. Used only as a conservative treatment for active, non-symptomatic carious lesions.
2. Patients unable to withstand standard restorative treatment, including but not limited to:
  - a. Frail patients
  - b. Uncooperative children
  - c. Patients with physical and/or cognitive disabilities
3. Patients with numerous lesions that cannot be treated in one visit.
4. Caries which are difficult to treat with traditional restorations.
5. Patients with limited access to dental care.
6. Caries arresting medicament may be considered inclusive when submitted in conjunction with other restorative procedures (contract dependant).

## Coding

*The following codes for treatments and procedures applicable to this document are included below for informational purposes. Inclusion or exclusion of a procedure, diagnosis or device code(s) does not constitute or imply member coverage or provider reimbursement policy. Please refer to the member's contract benefits in effect at the time of service to determine coverage or non-coverage of these services as it applies to an individual member.*

**CDT** including but not limited to:

- D1206 Topical application of fluoride varnish
- D1208 Topical application of fluoride – excluding varnish
- D1352 Preventive resin restoration in a moderate to high caries risk patient – permanent tooth
- D1354 Application of caries arresting medicament – per tooth
- D1355 Caries preventive medicament application - per tooth
- D2941 Interim therapeutic restoration – primary dentition
- D2991 application of hydroxyapatite regeneration medicament – per tooth

**ICD-10 CM** Diagnoses for Dental Diseases and Conditions: See the current CDT code book for details

## References

1. American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry. Policy on the Use of Silver Diamine Fluoride for Pediatric Dental Patients. *Pediatr Dent*. 2017 sep 15;39(6):51-53. Revised 2018.
2. American Dental Association. Evidence-based clinical practice guideline on nonrestorative treatments for carious lesions. October 2018.
3. Contreras V, Toro MJ, Elias-Boneta AR, et al. Effectiveness of silver diamine fluoride in caries prevention and arrest: a systemic literature review. *Gen Dent*. 2017 May-June;65(3):22-29.
4. Horst JA, Ellenikiotis H, UCSF Silver Caries Arrest Committee, Milgrom PM. UCSF Protocol for Caries Arrest Using Silver Diamine Fluoride: Rationale, Indication, and Consent. *Journal of the California Dental Association*. 2016; 44(1):16-28.
5. Pediatric Oral Health Research & Policy Center; Silver Diamine Fluoride, Policy Fact and Summary; American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry; May 2021.
6. CDT 2024 Current Dental Terminology, American Dental Association

**History**

Revision History	Version	Date	Nature of Change	SME
	Initial	04/22/2020	Initial	Committee
	Revised	12/4/2020	Annual Revision	Committee
	Revised	10/06/2021	Annual Revision	Committee
	Revised	10/21/2022	Annual Revision	Committee
	Revised	8/23/2023	Annual Revision	Committee

Federal and State law, as well as contract language, takes precedence over Dental Clinical Policy. Dental Clinical Policy provides guidance in interpreting dental benefit application. The Plan reserves the right to modify its Dental Clinical Policies and guidelines periodically and as necessary. Dental Clinical Policy is provided for informational purposes and does not constitute medical advice. These Policies are available for general adoption by any lines of business for consistent review of the medical or dental necessity and/or appropriateness of care of dental services. To determine if a review is required, please contact the customer service number on the member's card.

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