MEDICAL MANAGEMENT OF CARIES PROTOCOL

Silver Nitrate has been used in dentistry for over a hundred years. In recent years, it has been used in the Medical Management of Caries with great success. Advantage Dental Clinics’ objective in treating decay is to eliminate the infection causing the disease and to preserve tooth structure. With this in mind and considering the best interest of the patient, Advantage Dental Clinics recommends that providers implement the following protocol for the medical management of dental caries.

Medical Management of Caries protocol

1. Diagnose and document carious lesion
2. Determine if patient is a candidate for re-mineralization therapy
3. Arrest all caries prior to deciding restorative needs
   a. Use clinical judgment on individual patients needs
   b. Can be used as long as no signs of pulpitis present
4. Application of Silver Nitrate and fluoride varnish at initial visit then again at 2, 4, 8, 12 weeks from initial placement.
   a. Have patient or guardian sign consent at the initial application and then PARQ at additional visits. If new teeth are receiving treatment or a significant lapse of time has lapsed between treatments have a new consent signed.
   b. Bill out D9910 (application of desensitizing medicament) in conjunction with D1206 (topical fluoride varnish; therapeutic application for moderate to high caries risk patients) at each visit.
   NOTE: Dental staff need to bill out both codes. D9910 is an OHP non-covered service and D1206 is covered which will provide encounter data to the state giving credit to the contracted provider.
5. Evaluate need for restoration after 3 months of arrest to allow for secondary dentin formation
   a. Patient should remain on 3 month varnish until disease is under control
6. Proceed with treatment as clinically appropriate

Application of Silver Nitrate and Fluoride Varnish

1. Dry teeth
2. Apply 25% Silver Nitrate (FDA approved product) to appropriate teeth with visible cavities in very small amounts using a micro brush. One drop will treat 6 to 8 teeth.
   a. A cavity in the presence of Silver Nitrate will turn that part of the tooth dark. This is an indication that the infection in the tooth is dying.
3. Apply 5% Sodium Fluoride varnish (FDA approved product) used to seal silver nitrate into the treated tooth and kill the infection in the tooth. Do not rinse the silver nitrate. Apply fluoride varnish directly over the silver nitrate)
4. Do not allow patient to eat or drink for one hour and do not brush your teeth for 24 hours after treatment.

This caries arrest treatment does not prevent placing a temporary (D2940) or definitive filling (restorative code) in the future to restore function and esthetics. In many cases, if fillings are chosen after arrest of the tooth infection, little or no anesthetic may be necessary.

If you wish to receive further training on the Medical Management of Caries, please contact Advantage Administration at ProviderRelations@AdvantageDental.com.

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Advantage Dental Prevention Manual