



Disabled Persons Added to Medicare Part B Reimbursement Group

by Judy Muschamp

Thanks to increased gaming revenue returns, the Siletz Tribal Council has continued to set aside gaming revenue funds to reimburse tribal elders, **age 65 and older**, for Medicare Part B premiums.

And beginning July 1, 2003, **disabled persons under age 65** became eligible to participate. This benefit is available to you regardless of where you live. It's an excellent program for anyone who qualifies and if you live within the 11-county service area, helps Contract Health Services by shifting the majority of the cost of physician services to Medicare.

Here are answers to some common questions:

Question: What paperwork do you need so I can receive reimbursement?

Answer: I need a copy of your Medicare card. This shows that you're covered by Part B medical. I also need a copy of your benefit statement from Social Security that shows how much per month is withheld from your check. Mail these copies to Judy Muschamp, CTSI, P.O. Box 549, Siletz, OR 97380.

Question: I want to add Part B to my Medicare. When can I do that?

Answer: You can sign up for Medicare Part B:

- 1) When you first enroll in Medicare (your initial enrollment period). The initial enrollment period starts three months before you turn 65 and for seven months after.
- 2) Jan. 1 – March 31 of each year (your general enrollment period).

If you enroll in Part B during a general enrollment period, it'll be effective July 1 of the year in which you apply. Your Medicare Part B premium will go up 10 percent for each 12-month period that you could have had Medicare Part B, but didn't take it.

- 3) If you didn't take Medicare B when you were first eligible because you or your spouse were working and had group health plan coverage through your or your spouse's employer or union, you can sign up for Medicare Part B during a special enrollment period. You can sign up anytime you're still covered by the employer or union group health plan through your or your spouse's current or active employment, or during eight months following the month the employer or union group health plan coverage ends, or when the employment ends (whichever is first).

Contact the Social Security Administration at 1-800-772-1213 if you wish to add Medicare Part B.

Question: When will I receive my reimbursement from the tribe?

Answer: After your initial check is processed, you should receive your regular monthly check the first week of each month.

Question: Is the reimbursement taxable?

Answer: Yes, in some cases the reimbursement is considered taxable income. You'll receive a form 1099 from the tribe.

People who are disabled and currently are covered by Medicare Part B should send us your paperwork as soon as possible. Since I was late in discovering this additional benefit, we

will reimburse retroactive to July 1, 2003, until the end of December 2003.

If you have any other questions, please call either Amie Williams or me at 1-800-648-0449 or 541-444-1030.

Tooth Talk

by Linda Kreutzer, RDH

October is Trick or Treat Month

Time to Rethink "Sugar Habits"

Everyone knows that when kids eat candy and drink a lot of pop, they get cavities. Does this have to happen? Maybe not. Let's explore this a little more.

For teeth, it's not so much how much sugar we eat, it's **how often** we eat it that makes the difference.

When we eat (or drink) sugar, the ever-present bacteria in our mouth ferment the sugar and form acids. It's the **acid** that eats into our enamel and causes cavities.

Buffers in our saliva work to neutralize acids created by sugar. It takes our mouths approximately 20 minutes to clear out the harmful effects of eating a candy bar. This means the acids are active for 20 minutes immediately after eating or drinking sugar (a can of pop has nine teaspoons of sugar in it!). The acid is neutralized after 20 minutes and no longer is harmful to our teeth.

What happens if we sip on a pop all day long? Our mouths never have time to neutralize the acid in our mouth. We're literally bathing our teeth in sugar all day long and keeping our mouth a very acid-like place, where the teeth have no choice but to yield to bacterial plaque acids and decay.

But there is something we can do to help and not give up sugar or pop. Here's how:

1. Eat a candy bar, cookie, or cake, or drink a pop and get it over with.
2. Brush your teeth immediately after. Don't let the acids work in your mouth for 20 minutes.
3. Avoid sipping on a drink high in sugar all day (pop). Coffee

sweetened with sugar is just as harmful as pop. What's wrong with plain water? Not a thing! We need eight glasses every day.

4. Limit the times per day when sugar is consumed (maybe one pop per day at lunch). Diet pop is a good alternative.

Decay of young children's teeth, called "bottle-mouth" or "baby bottle tooth decay," is caused by the constant contact of sugar (from the milk or juice) on the child's teeth. This causes the baby teeth to rot because of the acid condition in the mouth.

Don't let the child go to bed with a bottle (unless it's water). Sugar in the milk bathes teeth in acid all night long. Be sure to clean the child's teeth before bed. A washcloth works well. After age 1, small children's toothbrushes can be used.

The No. 1 thing that families can do to prevent tooth decay in children and adults is to **control sugar consumption!** That means you should think about how sugar is consumed and how often each day. Drinking pop is a habit that can be changed.

The basic rules are: Consume less sugar, consume it all at once and get it over with, and brush immediately afterward if possible. Make sure to brush both adults' and children's teeth right before bedtime! Visit the dentist at least once per year. Get your teeth cleaned twice per year.

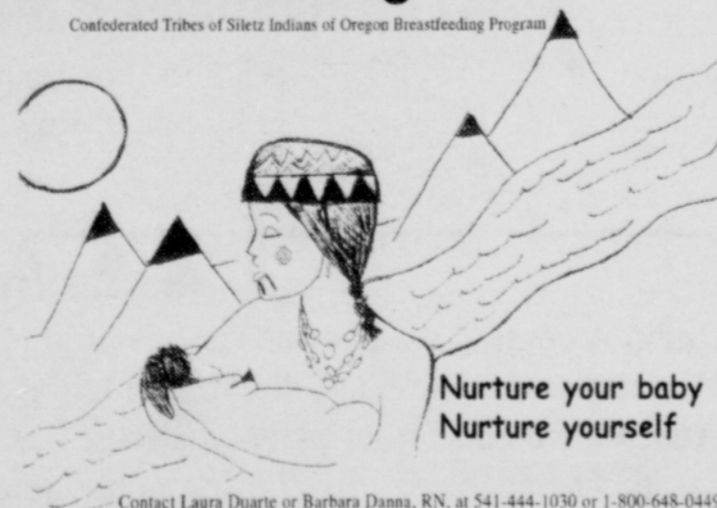
Don't let Halloween and daily use of pop and sweets play "trick-or-treat" with your teeth!

Moms and Babies Breastfeeding Circle

Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians of Oregon Breastfeeding Program

2nd Tuesday of each month,
6 - 7:30 p.m.
Housing Department
Conference Room

You're invited to come eat,
visit, and learn about the
many benefits of
breastfeeding.



Contact Laura Duarte or Barbara Danna, RN, at 541-444-1030 or 1-800-648-0449

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