

# Cigna Dental cavities risk assessment for customers



Tooth decay (often referred to as cavities) is the single most common chronic childhood disease. In fact, it's five times more common than asthma and seven times more common than hay fever.<sup>1</sup> Also, many adults have untreated cavities (e.g., 27% of those 20–39 years, 21% of those 40–59 years, and 19% of those 60 years and older).<sup>2</sup>

This risk assessment tool is designed to help you and your dentist identify factors that might increase your risk for cavities. **Complete this form and share it with your dentist at your next dental check-up.**

**Please note that this tool serves to provide a guideline as to your risk for cavities. It is important for all patients to visit their dentist on a regular basis and discuss their oral health.**

## Risk assessment instructions:

For each question, write the numeric “points” associated with your response in the “points” box. Total the points (adding the positive values and subtracting the negative values) to determine your total points/risk value.

Based upon your points, your risk for tooth decay is as follows:

- 10 to 0 = low risk
- 1 to 5 = low to moderate risk
- 6 to 10 = moderate risk
- 11 or greater = high risk

To be answered by the patient, parent or primary caregiver about the patient. (Select the response under the risk columns that best answers each question.)

Patient name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Enter points\* in this column



Question and facts about dental health	Low risk	Moderate risk	High risk	Points
<b>For adults and children:</b> <b>How often do you visit your dentist?</b> Regular dental visits allow the dentist to help prevent and/or treat tooth decay at an earlier stage.	<b>At least 2 times a year</b> (0 point)	<b>Once a year</b> (2 points)	<b>Rarely or never</b> (5 points)	
<b>How often do you brush your teeth each day?</b> Frequent tooth brushing is an important part of protecting your teeth from cavities. The American Dental Association suggests brushing your teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste. <sup>3</sup>	<b>2–3 times</b> (-1 point)	<b>1 time</b> (2 points)	<b>&lt; 1 time</b> (7 points)	

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Enter points\* in  
this column



Question and facts about dental health	Low risk	Moderate risk	High risk	Points
<p><b>How often do you floss between your teeth?</b> Use of dental floss or other special types of cleaners between your teeth also helps to prevent tooth decay. It is recommended that you floss at least once a day.</p>	<b>Every day</b> (-1 point)	<b>3–4 times per week</b> (2 points)	<b>Rarely or never</b> (5 points)	
<p><b>Do you use fluoride toothpaste?</b> Using toothpaste that contains fluoride helps to reduce the risk for cavities.</p>	<b>Yes</b> (-1 point)		<b>No</b> (4 points)	
<p><b>Have you had cavities in the past?</b> Patients who have had cavities in the past are more likely to have them in the future.</p>	<b>No</b> (0 point)		<b>Yes</b> (3 points)	
<p><b>How long has it been since your last cavity?</b> Development of new or recent cavities indicates active disease and the potential for more cavities.</p>	<b>More than 24 months or never</b> (0 point)	<b>12–24 months</b> (2 points)	<b>Less than 12 months</b> (7 points)	
<p><b>How many times daily do you eat sugary foods (such as candy, soda, cookies, cake or juice) between meals?</b> Sugary foods and drinks increase acid production by bacteria that causes cavities. That doesn't mean that you can never enjoy these types of foods; but you should limit sugary foods and drinks between meals to reduce additional acid exposure to your teeth.</p>	<b>Only with meals</b> (0 point)	<b>1–2</b> (2 points)	<b>3 or more</b> (8 points)	
<p><b>Do you wear braces, orthodontic appliances, or partial dentures?</b> Wearing braces, appliances, and/or partial dentures may trap plaque on your teeth and also makes it difficult to brush and floss which increases your risk for tooth decay.</p>	<b>No</b> (0 point)		<b>Yes</b> (5 points)	
<p><b>Does your mouth often feel dry (not enough saliva)?</b> A dry mouth makes a person more prone to cavities. If you have a dry mouth, please ask your dentist about ways to increase the moisture in your mouth.</p>	<b>No</b> (0 point)		<b>Yes</b> (8 points)	
<p><b>Do you have special health care needs, especially any which limit your ability to care for your teeth and gums?</b> People with special health care needs may require assistance to maintain their oral health.</p>	<b>No</b> (0 point)		<b>Yes</b> (5 points)	
<p><b>Do you use chewing gum, mints or other products that contain Xylitol?</b> Clinical studies have shown that regular use of products containing Xylitol, a natural sweetener may actually help to reduce cavities.</p>	<b>Yes</b> (-1 point)		<b>No</b> (0 point)	
<p><b>Have you had sealants placed on your teeth?</b> Dental sealants are placed on teeth with deep grooves and pits to prevent decay. Consult with your dentist to see if sealants are appropriate for you or your child.</p>	<b>Yes</b> (-2 points)		<b>No</b> (0 point)	
<b>Pages 1 and 2 point subtotal</b>				

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Enter points\* in  
this column



Question and facts about dental health	Low risk	Moderate risk	High risk	Points
<p><b>Additional questions for children under the age of 12.</b>  <b>Does the child's parent, primary caregiver, or siblings have cavities?</b>            Children have an increased risk for cavities if their parents, caregiver, and/or siblings have them.</p>	No (0 point)		Yes (5 points)	
<p><b>Does the child sleep with a baby bottle that contains milk or juice?</b>            Baby bottle syndrome occurs when a baby is allowed to sleep with a bottle filled with any liquid that contains any form of sugar. Milk, fruit juice and soda contain sugar that can cause a baby's teeth to decay. The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry recommends avoiding putting children to sleep with anything other than water in their bedtime bottle.<sup>4</sup></p>	No (0 point)		Yes (11 points)	
<p><b>Does the child live in a community that has fluoridated water?</b>            Drinking water that contains fluoride helps to protect teeth from tooth decay. You may want to check with your local water supplier regarding your water's fluoride content.</p>	Yes (-2 points)		No (0 point)	
<p><b>Does the child take fluoride supplements or use fluoride rinses?</b>            Fluoride supplements may be prescribed for children living in areas with little or no water fluoridation to prevent cavities.</p>	Yes (-2 points)		No (0 point)	
<b>Total Points (refer to the top of page 1 for scoring values)</b>				

If you have questions about your dental health, speak to your dentist. If you're a Cigna customer and you haven't already done so, register at **myCigna.com**, a secure online tool that makes it easier and faster for you to access your personalized dental plan information, print an ID card, find a network dentist and much more. Or, you can call **1.800.Cigna24 (1.800.244.6224)** 24/7 to speak with one of our friendly customer service representatives.

\* Point values are not validated

1. Source: Surgeon General's Report on Oral Health in America;
2. [www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/factsheets/dental\\_caries](http://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/factsheets/dental_caries);
3. [www.ada.org](http://www.ada.org);
4. [www.aapd.org](http://www.aapd.org)

References:

"Policy on Use of a Caries-risk Assessment Tool (CAT) for Infants, Children, and Adolescents" American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry Council on Clinical Affairs.

"Assessing patients' caries risk." Journal of the American Dental Association. Margherita Fontana, DDS, PhD; Domenick T. Zero, DDS, MS. September 2006, Vol. 137, pgs. 1231-1239.

"Caries Management by Risk Assessment: Consensus Statement, April 2002" Journal of the California Dental Association.

John D.B. Featherstone, MSc, PhD, et. al. March 2003, Vol. 31, No. 3, pgs. 257-269.



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