

KATHY S FORBES

CDT Procedure Codes - What They Didn't Teach in Hygiene/Dental School

Kathy has been a dental hygienist, educator, speaker, author, consultant, seminar, and study club leader for over 40 years. She speaks frequently about the correct classification, documentation, treatment planning, and CDT code selection for patients when it comes to dental hygiene procedures. In addition, she holds a license with the ADA for Current Dental Terminology© which allows her to provide the most up-to-date understanding of current dental procedure codes. She currently serves as a Director for the DentalCodeology™ Consortium, reviewing and developing procedure codes relevant to dental hygiene practice which are presented to the Code Maintenance Committee of the American Dental Association in March. She has been attending the CMC meetings each year since 2016 so she can provide testimony for the DCC submissions as well as understand the “why behind the what” when it comes to changes in any of the procedure codes.

Kathy has articles published in RDH Magazine, Dentistry Today, Dental IQ, and others specifically addressing dental hygiene treatment planning and correct procedure code selection. Her national engagements include presentations to the American Dental Association, ADHA Center for Lifelong Learning, RDH Under One Roof, and the Pacific Northwest Dental Conference. Kathy's most recent honors include being selected as a recipient of the 2023 Sunstar RDH Achievement of Distinction in the category of Entrepreneurship as well as becoming a member of the inaugural class of Fellows for the American Dental Hygienists' Association. Through her company, Professional Dental Seminars, Inc., she provides customized in-office, interactive workshops to address dental practices' specific concerns related to treatment planning, procedure code selection and long-term management of periodontal patients.



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THE DENTAL HYGIENE CODING COACH

“This class was such an encouragement because it reminded me that I can do more for my patients (and the practice) than just clean teeth!” - RDH

Dental Hygiene Treatment Planning and Selecting the Correct CDT Procedure Codes



CDT Procedure Codes - What They Didn't Teach You in Dental Hygiene School

Accurate, evidence-based diagnosis is the best method to determine appropriate, medically necessary dental treatment. Once this diagnosis is determined, the clinician will develop a treatment plan. This includes selecting the correct CDT procedure codes for the treatment. Too often, the procedure code selected may be inaccurate because dental software programs ONLY include the code number and title, NOT the descriptor.

Many clinicians are unaware of the ADA's Current Dental Terminology (CDT) descriptors for each procedure code which must be used by the business staff to correctly bill patients and their insurance carriers. Inaccurate billing can not only cause the practice to undercharge and lose production but can also result in patients having to pay more out-of-pocket dollars than they were expecting to pay, which then can lead to mistrust. This can further lead to patients refusing to have ANY treatment completed because they cannot believe the "estimate" which they were given.

As technology and treatment modalities evolve, new CDT procedure codes are developed, and current CDT procedure codes are amended by the ADA's Code Maintenance Committee (which meets every March). Over the past 5 years, there has been a significant increase in procedure codes specific to preventive products used and recommended by hygienists. This course will provide the latest nomenclature and descriptors for procedures which can be performed by dental hygienists. Depending upon the state, there are between 50-120 CDT procedures/codes which are used by hygienists!

And what about the ICD-10 Diagnostic Codes for dental and dental hygiene procedures (over 800) listed in the current CDT Procedure Codes Manual? How and why do we need to know these? So many questions!

OBJECTIVES

- Explain the definitions and descriptions of the CDT Procedure Codes for Evaluations, Preventive Services, Periodontal Therapy, Caries Management Products and the additional procedures provided by dental hygienists. When services are billed correctly, insurance benefits will be maximized, and production will increase.
- Discuss the basics of "Dental Insurance 101" and what is happening within the dental 'insurance' industry related to benefits. Typically, how do insurance carriers benefit (or not benefit) these procedures? And what about billing Medical Insurance for these dental procedures? Yes, you can!
- Describe various verbal strategies for communicating with patients about their need for preventive, periodontal or restorative treatment and the importance of allowing your office to help them manage their long-term dental care.



2 - 3 Hours (contact for time adjustment)

What is the CDT Procedure Code for a Cleaning? Oh Wait!

There IS no “Cleaning” code!



OBJECTIVES

- Explain the definitions and descriptions of the CDT Procedure Codes for Evaluations, Preventive Services, Periodontal Therapy, and the additional procedures provided by dental hygienists in accordance with their state practice act.
- Accurately describe the differences between the 7 “cleaning” codes.
- Discuss the basics of “Dental Insurance 101” and what is happening within the dental ‘insurance’ industry related to benefits. Typically, how do insurance carriers benefit (or not benefit) these procedures? And what about billing Medical Insurance for these dental procedures?
- Describe various verbal strategies for communicating with patients about their need for preventive, periodontal or restorative treatment and the importance of allowing your office to help them manage their long-term dental care.



Our profession is guilty of devaluing hygienists’ services by using the term “cleaning” to describe the preventive/therapeutic services they provide. Since there is no “cleaning” CDT procedure code, what is the procedure completed?

Accurate, evidence-based diagnosis is the best method to determine appropriate treatment. Once this dental hygiene diagnosis is determined, the clinician will develop a treatment plan. This includes selecting the correct CDT procedure codes for the treatment. Too often, the procedure code selected may be inaccurate because dental software programs ONLY include the code number and title, NOT the descriptor.

There are 7 distinct CDT procedure codes from which dentists and hygienists usually select for the services they provide their patients, and each has a very distinct descriptor. Many clinicians are unaware of the ADA’s Current Dental Terminology (CDT) descriptors for each procedure code which must be used by the business staff to correctly bill patients and their insurance carriers. Inaccurate billing can often result in patients having to pay more out-of-pocket dollars than they were expecting to pay which then can lead to mistrust. This can further lead to patients refusing to have ANY treatment completed because they cannot believe the “estimate” which they were given.

As technology and treatment modalities evolve, new CDT procedure codes are developed, and current CDT procedure codes are amended by the ADA’s Code Maintenance Committee (which meets every March). This course will provide the latest nomenclature and descriptors for the Evaluation codes (Exams) used to determine the Preventive/Perio codes (the 7 “cleaning” codes and more). Over the past 5 years, there has been a significant increase in procedure codes specific to preventive products used and recommended by hygienists. And what about the ICD-10 Diagnostic Codes (707 of them) listed in the current CDT Procedure Codes Manual? How and why do we need to know these? So many questions!

1 - 2 Hours (contact for time adjustment)

Caries Management: How to Select the Correct CDT Procedure Codes



Over the past 5 years, there has been a significant increase in procedure codes specific to preventive products used and recommended by hygienists. Hygienists are constantly being introduced to more and more products to help patients manage dental caries, yet how do they determine the most appropriate product for their patients? And then, which CDT procedure code should be selected to represent the medical necessity for that particular product?

There are at least 10 procedure codes which can be used for assessing the patient's need for caries preventive products. Two of those are the traditional D1206 and D1208 relating to sodium fluoride applications in the office. But what about other products which can be used: silver diamine fluoride, chlorhexidine varnish, etc.? What procedure codes are selected? Hygienists may be unaware of the ADA's Current Dental Terminology (CDT) descriptors for many of these procedure codes which specifically describe the rationale/mode of action for these products.

This course will provide the latest code nomenclatures and descriptors for products used for caries management and the rationale behind the development of the procedure codes. This will include the “why behind the what” when selecting the most appropriate product for patients. And finally, there is a new procedure code coming in CDT 2024 which was created for a new type of medicament that will take caries prevention to a whole new level: D2991 application of hydroxyapatite regeneration medicament, per tooth.

OBJECTIVES

- Explain the definitions and descriptions of the CDT Procedure Codes related to assessment for caries risk as well as the various codes for caries management products.
- Explain the rationale for selecting any of the caries management products for patients.
- Describe various verbal strategies for communicating with patients explaining why any of these products would be beneficial, even if they do not have insurance.
- Understand the ICD-10 diagnostic codes (which can be documented on a dental insurance claim form) which can be selected to describe the medical necessity of the patient to receive the product.



2 Hours (contact for time adjustment)

Is 60 Minutes Enough Time? What is the Standard of Care?



Fifty years ago, the dental hygiene recare appointment was 1 hour. Currently it is still 60 minutes (and even shortened to 30 minutes in some offices) while the number of procedures expected to be completed grows! Between infection control protocols, medical history/drug interaction evaluations, risk assessment protocols, selection of diagnostic codes, aging population issues (mental and physical), and more, it is amazing that any hygienist can develop an appropriate dental hygiene treatment plan as well as provide quality dental hygiene and periodontal therapy which include necessary radiographs, periodontal chartings, patient education and more during those 60 minutes.

It is up to the hygienist to provide comprehensive assessments, submit the appropriate documentation as well as determine CDT procedure codes (and coming soon, ICD-10 diagnostic codes) which most clearly describe the medically necessary dental treatment provided to the patient. And will that treatment meet the Standard of Care? What exactly is the Standard of Care?

This highly interactive presentation will have audience members sharing their successes as well as their challenges when it comes to providing quality, customized care to their patients. How to do it all? So many questions!

OBJECTIVES

- Describe how dental hygiene services and procedures have evolved in the last 50 years.
- Discuss dental hygiene diagnosis, dental hygiene/periodontal treatment planning and the related initial CDT procedure code selection. (Which of the 7 “cleaning” procedure codes would be appropriate?)
- Define what procedures must be done during a typical dental hygiene appointment to provide comprehensive care to patients and meet the Standard of Care.
- Describe the various resources available to dental professionals which outline Standard of Care for dental hygiene procedures.



2 - 3 Hours (contact for time adjustment)

Implementing the 2018 AAP Classifications of Periodontal and Peri-implant Diseases and Conditions



A “hands-on”, interactive presentation

So many of the services dental hygienists and dentists provide depend on an accurate diagnosis. And now the World Workshop on the Classification of Periodontal Peri-implant Diseases and Conditions details comprehensive and all-encompassing details in order to determine a diagnosis. Clinicians are left with trying to determine how to incorporate this assessment into their daily practice.

Look no further! This course will provide a simple approach and PATIENT ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET which can be used to determine each patient’s disease status using these new classifications. Case studies (radiographs and periodontal chartings) will be reviewed so that participants can have a “hands-on” approach to using the worksheet and determining the correct periodontal disease diagnosis. Once a diagnosis is established, only then can a clinician determine the appropriate treatment for their patients.

Each participant will have the opportunity to review and discuss 4 case scenarios and determine the 2018 AAP Classifications. In addition, each participant will walk away with a ‘clean’ copy of this **PATIENT ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET** to take back to their offices and use immediately and a **DH TEMPLATE** (utilizing ADPIE protocols) for completing documentation during a dental hygiene appointment.

OBJECTIVES

- Understand the 2018 AAP Classifications of Periodontal and Peri-implant Diseases and Conditions and compare it to the 1999 AAP Classifications currently in use.
- Understand how ICD-10 Diagnostic Codes (currently listed in the current CDT Procedure Code Manual) may affect dental hygiene treatment planning by documenting medical necessity.
- Utilize the PATIENT ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET to determine the AAP Classification of Periodontal and Peri-implant Diseases and Conditions.
- Implement the ADPIE template into your current software program.



2 Hours (contact for time adjustment)

The Practical Side of Dental Hygiene Practice

Course Presented to Dental Hygiene Students just prior to Graduation



Standardization of Clinical Procedures When Developing the Dental Hygiene Treatment Plan

As dental hygiene graduates enter the workforce, they will usually be expected to know and understand the CDT procedure codes they will be selecting for the services they provide. Unfortunately, dental hygiene programs do not always include coursework where detailed content related to these codes is given. This 3 hour presentation addresses:

- Understanding dental “insurance” and risk management
- What “cleaning” procedure codes do I pick? What about ICD-10 diagnostic codes?
- The business side of the dental hygiene department

Graduating students will hear practical approaches to “real world” situations relating to treatment planning dental hygiene procedures and the procedure codes which would be selected if the service is provided. Emphasis will be placed on the descriptors for evaluation/diagnostic procedures, preventive procedures (i.e., prophylaxis, preventive products, sealants, etc.), therapeutic procedures (perio therapy, etc.) and more.

“This was one of the most beneficial presentations i’ve had from the time i returned to school in 2015!”

- Student RDH Graduate

OBJECTIVES

- Explain the definitions and descriptions of the CDT Procedure Codes for Evaluations, Preventive Services, Periodontal Therapy, and the additional procedures provided by dental hygienists in accordance with their state practice act.
- Discuss the basics of “Dental Insurance 101” and what is happening within the dental ‘insurance’ industry related to benefits. Typically, how do insurance carriers benefit (or not benefit) from these procedures?
- Identify potential risk management (fraudulent act) issues if incorrect procedure codes are submitted to carriers for reimbursement.
- Describe how a dental hygienist can use procedure codes/report to identify his/her value to the dental practice.



3 Hours (contact for time adjustment)