

# Teledentistry Coverage During COVID-19

For dental emergencies and urgent dental care



*Dental emergencies can happen when you least expect it. If you have an urgent problem during COVID-19, you can seek care from the safety of home. Because teledentistry is covered by your Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana plan.*

## How teledentistry visits work

During a teledentistry visit, you and the dentist stay safely in your own separate locations. Most likely, you'll have a two-way conversation through video conference or phone. Using a digital phone or tablet, you take a high-quality picture or video of your problem and share with your dentist. The dentist will evaluate your condition and advise what to do next.

## Getting actual treatment

Some dentists may advise that you come to the office for emergency treatment. Rest assured, they'll take every precaution to sterilize the environment so it's as safe as possible. But some states are advising dentists not to treat patients in the office, so it's up to your dentist to decide what to do. Your dentist will determine the best location to provide treatment, if needed.

But in some cases, the remedy may be handled over the phone. For example, a patient with a gum infection may simply need a prescription called into the pharmacy.

## Some apps that can help

Your dentist may already offer virtual visits through an existing teledentistry app. If not, the American Dental Association (ADA) has approved using some common social media apps, such as FaceTime, Skype, Facebook Messenger video chat, Google Hangouts video and Zoom. But for security reasons, the ADA discourages using public-facing apps like Facebook Live, Twitch and TikTok.

## When to seek immediate care

According to the ADA, get care right away for these kinds of serious problems:

- Bleeding that doesn't stop
- Painful swelling in or around your mouth
- Pain in a tooth, teeth or jawbone
- Gum infection with pain or swelling
- After surgery treatment (dressing change or stitch removal)
- Broken or knocked out tooth
- Denture adjustment for people getting radiation or other cancer treatment
- Snipping or adjusting wire of braces that hurts your cheek or gums
- Biopsy of abnormal tissue

## Teledentistry claims

Your dentist can submit your teledentistry claim for you. Our dental partner, United Concordia, will process teledentistry claims in the same timely manner you've come to expect. Teledentistry coverage level is subject to plan terms and conditions.

## Be prepared

Make sure to keep your dentist's phone number handy in case you need it quickly. You might even want to note other ways to contact your dentist in case of emergency, such as cell phone or email address. Make sure to talk to your dentist if you have any concerns. If you have questions, call the Dental Questions number on the back of your ID card.

