

Digital solutions comparison guide

API, EDI and the UnitedHealthcare Provider Portal

Which digital solutions best fit your practice needs?

This guide outlines features available with our digital solutions – Application Programming Interface (API), Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) and the UnitedHealthcare Provider Portal. These secure solutions are available to help you quickly get the information you need for most UnitedHealthcare benefit plans.

Our goal is to:

- Make it easier for you to work with us
- Reduce the time it takes for you to perform claim activities
- Help you get paid faster

	Application Programming Interface (API)	Electronic Data Interchange (EDI)	UnitedHealthcare Provider Portal
What it is	A computing interface that allows applications to communicate with each other	An automated way to exchange information with UnitedHealthcare and other payers	Self-service tools for UnitedHealthcare only. Check eligibility, manage claims and submit referral requests.
How it works	With technical assistance, pull the data you need using API connections. Data is returned in real time and requests can be automated.	Integrated with practice management or hospital information systems through a clearinghouse	Online tools accessed through UHCprovider.com
When to use it	For electronic administrative transactions such as claim status and payments, eligibility and benefits, claim reconsiderations and appeals, and document retrieval.	To exchange data electronically for claims, eligibility, benefits, prior authorizations, notifications, referrals and remittances	For more detailed information or for transactions that aren't available with EDI
Submitting requests	Batch or single transactions	Batch or single transactions	Maximum of 20 transactions at a time for eligibility, single submissions for other transactions
Information received	Detailed information	Based on industry standards	Detailed information
Information processing	Information is automatically uploaded	Information is automatically uploaded	Information must be entered manually
Ideal for	Organizations with medium to high volume	Organizations with medium to high volume	Organizations with low transaction volume or no IT support
Cost	Free	Varies	Free

The following chart shows eligibility, benefits and claims information available using API, EDI and the UnitedHealthcare Provider Portal.

Eligibility and benefits	API	API extended 271	EDI 271	UnitedHealthcare Provider Portal
Member information, such as name, date of birth, gender, address and ID number	X	X	X	X
Insurance information, such as payer, Payer ID, plan description and claims address	X	X	X	X
View a member's ID card	X			X
Member copay, coinsurance and deductible amounts	X	X	X	X
Out-of-pocket maximums	X	X	X	X
Therapy accumulators for most UnitedHealthcare commercial members	X	X	X	X
Vendor coverage	X	X	X	X
Health reimbursement account (HRA) information		X	X	X
Health savings account (HSA) information	X	X		X
Funding type	X	X	X	X
Care opportunities for UnitedHealthcare® Medicare Advantage and UnitedHealthcare Community Plan members	X	X	X	X
Prior authorization and notification requirements*	X	X		X
Referral requirements	X	X	X	X
Member language assistance/preference	X			X
Network status for UnitedHealthcare commercial plans	X			X
Primary care provider information (the Eligibility and Benefits tool provides enhanced details, such as tax ID number, effective dates and accountable care organization information)	X	X	X	X
Coordination of benefits information (for all health plans in the Eligibility and Benefits tool; only some health plans in EDI)	X	X	X	X
Detailed benefits (may vary by health plan) in the Eligibility and Benefits tool; Select Service Type Codes in EDI	X	X	X	X
Service coordinator for UnitedHealthcare Community Plan				X
Provides other plan information if another active plan is available*	X	X		X

*Information is not provided with the standard EDI transaction.



Claims status	API	API extended 277	EDI 277	UnitedHealthcare Provider Portal
Provides status and proprietary codes (EDI returns status codes only)*	X	X	X	X
Diagnosis codes	X			X
Date a claim was received*	X	X		X
EDI provides cardiology and radiology; the Claims tool on the portal provides cardiology, radiology, ambulatory payment classification (APC) and proprietary coding	X	X	X	X
Reimbursement logic at the line level	X	X	X	X
Copay, deductible and coinsurance amounts*	X	X		X
Coordination of benefits information*	X	X		X
Payment/check information (may vary by health plan)	X	X	X	X
View letters (may vary by health plan)	X			X
Provider remittance advice (may vary by health plan)*	X	X		X
Submit reconsideration requests	X			X
Submit requested information for pending claims for most commercial and Medicare Advantage members				X
Submit appeals	X			X
Bulk recovery information for most commercial members				X
Search claims by patient account number or claim number	X	X	X	X

*Information is not provided with the standard EDI transaction.

Claims submissions	EDI 837	UnitedHealthcare Provider Portal
Professional claims, including National Drug Code (NDC) claims, for all UnitedHealthcare members	X	X
Institutional claims	X	X
Secondary/coordination of benefits	X	X
Tertiary claims	X	
Required fields highlighted	X	X
On-screen messages in the Claims tool if you need to correct certain errors before submission; with EDI, software vendors may provide this capability within the electronic claim form	X	X
Claim rejection errors, based on HIPAA edits applied*	X	X
Smart Edits are applied pre-adjudication to either alert health care professionals of potential billing errors that could result in a denial or notify them of upcoming new or changes in policies.	X	X
Eliminate paper, postage and mail time	X	X

*Within 24 hours after submission.

Referrals	API	EDI 278R	UnitedHealthcare Provider Portal
Request referral and return confirmation number	X	X	X
Check the status of a referral request	X		X
Referral status returned at time of request	X	X	X
View, print or save confirmation numbers and timelines for submitted referrals*	X	X	X

*On the UnitedHealthcare Provider Portal, referral status is returned at the time of request for Community and Medicare Advantage plans. Commercial health plans referral status is 24-48 hours later.

Prior authorization and notification	EDI 278A	EDI 278N	EDI 278I	UnitedHealthcare Provider Portal
Request prior authorization or notification	X	X		X
Receipt number returned at time of request	X	X	X	X
Check the status of your request, including those made by phone			X	X
Notice of dismissal (discharge date) available		X		X

Questions? We're here to help

For more information about API:

- Website: UHCprovider.com/api
- Email: APIconsultant@uhc.com
- API Marketplace: apimarketplace.uhcprovider.com

For more information about EDI:

- Website: UHCprovider.com/edi
- Contact us: UHCprovider.com/edicontacts
- Request help: [EDI Transaction Support Form](#)
- Phone: **800-842-1109**, 7 a.m.–5 p.m. CT, Monday–Friday

For more information about the UnitedHealthcare Provider Portal:

- Website: UHCprovider.com/portal
- Chat: For chat options and contact information, visit UHCprovider.com/contactus
- Phone: **866-842-3278**, 7 a.m.–9 p.m. CT, Monday–Friday



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