

WHAT ARE DENTAL SEALANTS?

Sealants are a simple and effective way to prevent the most common type of tooth decay in molar teeth. The chewing surfaces of molars have many deep pits and grooves where the bacteria that cause cavities hide. These pits and grooves are hard to clean with a toothbrush. Sealants are a plastic coating that is painted on the teeth to seal the pits and grooves and prevent tooth decay.

IS THIS A PAINFUL PROCEDURE?

Placing sealants is painless and easy for your child. The tooth is cleaned, conditioned, dried, and painted with the plastic sealant. It *is* important that you instruct your child to be on their best behavior and to be cooperative. Sealant appointments are a great way to build self-esteem in your child.

WILL SEALANTS PROTECT MY CHILD FROM EVER HAVING CAVITIES?

Sealants only protect the chewing surfaces of the molars and will not prevent decay in between teeth, in the front teeth, or on the roots. However, studies show that 84% of tooth decay in children occurs in the pits and grooves of permanent molars, areas best protected by sealants. Without sealants, 75% of lower first permanent molars decay by age 13. While sealants do not completely protect your child from tooth decay, they significantly reduce the chances of decay.

WHAT ARE FLUORIDE TREATMENTS?

Fluoride is a naturally occurring mineral. Fluoride applications have been proven to be effective in preventing and reversing the early signs of tooth decay.

IS THIS A PAINFUL PROCEDURE?

The fluoride will be applied on all of your child's teeth. The teeth will have a "yellow tint", which is the fluoride coating, which will disappear. Children should not brush the evening of their application, to allow the fluoride to penetrate the tooth surface.

WILL THE VARNISH PROTECT MY CHILD FROM EVER HAVING CAVITIES?

Fluoride varnish, which is a gel-like substance that is "painted" on the child's teeth with a small brush, strengthens tooth enamel to reduce and/or prevent tooth decay. The varnish is very safe since it's applied directly to the teeth. While fluoride varnish does not completely protect your child from tooth decay, it does significantly reduce the chances of decay.