



Fluoride Varnish Protects Teeth

What is Fluoride Varnish?

Fluoride varnish is a protective coating that is painted on a child's teeth to prevent cavities. It can also be painted on teeth that already have cavities. Fluoride can slow down or help stop cavities from getting bigger. This does not replace regular dental checkups at your dental office as your child may still need dental treatment.

The fluoride varnish will be painted on your child's teeth one or two times each year. The number of times depends on whether your child is at risk for early childhood tooth decay.

How is Fluoride Varnish Put On?

The varnish is painted onto your child's teeth using a small disposable brush. It takes only a few seconds and is easily accepted by children.

Is Fluoride Varnish Safe?

Yes. Fluoride varnish has been used for several years in many countries. Along with being safe, fluoride is an inexpensive and practical way to reduce tooth decay.

After Fluoride Varnish is Painted On

Your child's teeth may look yellow or cloudy on the first day. This color will gradually go away. It is normal for the fluoride varnish to make the teeth feel sticky. This only lasts a short time.

After the fluoride varnish is painted on, your child can have a drink of water any time. Your child should:

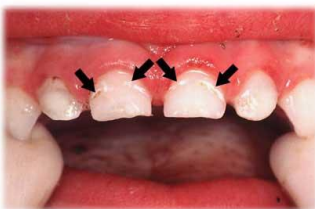
- eat only soft foods at the next meal
- avoid sticky foods for the rest of the day (e.g. fruit rollups, toffee, gum)
- not brush or clean teeth until the next morning

Protect Your Child's Smile!

Baby teeth are important! Healthy baby teeth help your child chew properly, speak clearly and smile brightly. To keep your child's teeth healthy:

- limit sweet snacks to mealtimes
- floss and brush your child's teeth daily
- visit the dentist at least once a year

If you have questions about your child's teeth, visit your dental office or call the dental health educator in your health region.



Find areas that need fluoride varnish.



Dry teeth with a gauze.



Paint fluoride varnish on teeth.

All photos courtesy of the University of Iowa, Department of Pediatric Dentistry