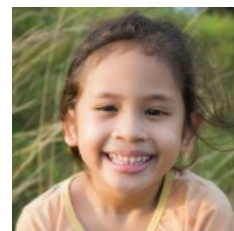




Dental Sealants for Children

Sealants are a fast and easy way of protecting your child's teeth that act as barriers to cavity-prone areas. They are usually applied to the chewing surfaces of back teeth and sometimes used to cover deep pits and grooves. Both primary and permanent teeth can benefit from sealants.



Toothbrushes Cannot Reach Everything

Thorough brushing and flossing help remove food particles and plaque from smooth surfaces of teeth. But toothbrush bristles cannot reach all the way into the depressions and grooves to extract food and plaque. Sealants protect these vulnerable areas by "sealing out" plaque and food.

About Sealants

Sealants are easy for your dentist to apply. The sealant is painted onto the tooth enamel, where it bonds directly to the tooth and hardens. This plastic resin bonds into the depressions and grooves (pits and fissures) of the chewing surfaces of back teeth. The sealant acts as a barrier, protecting enamel from plaque and acids. As long as the sealant remains intact, the tooth surface will be protected from decay (</English/healthy-living/oral-health/Pages/Preventing-Tooth-Decay-in-Children.aspx>). Sealants hold up well under the force of normal chewing and may last several years before a reapplication is needed. During your regular dental visits, your dentist (</English/family-life/health-management/pediatric-specialists/Pages/What-is-a-Pediatric-Dentist.aspx>) will check the condition of the sealants and reapply them when necessary.

The likelihood of developing pit and fissure decay begins early in life, so children and teenagers are obvious candidates. But adults can benefit from sealants as well.

Key Ingredients in Preventing Tooth Decay and Maintaining a Healthy Mouth:

- Brushing twice a day with an ADA-accepted fluoride toothpaste
- Cleaning between the teeth daily with floss or another interdental cleaner
- Eating a balanced diet and limiting snacks
- Visiting your dentist regularly

Ask your dentist about whether sealants will help your child.

Additional Resources:

- Preventing Tooth Decay in Children (</English/healthy-living/oral-health/Pages/Preventing-Tooth-Decay-in-Children.aspx>)
- Sealants for Children (Video) (<http://www.mouthhealthy.org/en/az-topics/s/sealants?channelId=fa99bfe8b3e1412ca8c625e4d1e97103&channelListId&mediaId=c6d69c6504aa40d5a52e8964b140a634>) (MouthHealthy.org)

Last Updated 9/13/2013

Source Adapted from MouthHealthy.org (Copyright © 2013 American Dental Association)

The information contained on this Web site should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations in treatment that your physician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances.

