



Healthy Smiles
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Dental Sealant Fact Sheet

What are dental sealants?

Dental sealants are thin plastic coatings which are applied to the chewing surfaces of the molars (back permanent teeth). Most tooth decay in children and teens occurs in these surfaces. Sealants cover these chewing surfaces to help prevent decay.

What are the benefits of sealants?

Sealants are slippery, which makes it harder for decay-causing plaque to stick in the pits and grooves of molars. Because sealants can prevent more than 80% of dental decay in children, they reduce the need for fillings and other more expensive treatment. Sealants are an economical way to keep teeth healthy for years.

How are sealants applied?

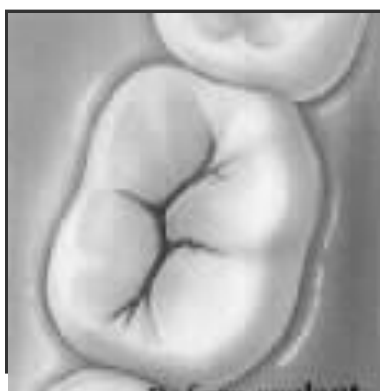
Applying sealants is simple, painless, and does not require drills or needles. It is an easy three-step process: First, a dental hygienist cleans the tooth with toothpaste. Then the tooth is polished. Finally, the sealant is painted on the tooth and is hardened with a small, bright light. That's all it takes!

Do sealants replace fluoride?

NO. Fluorides, such as those used in community water and toothpaste, also help to prevent decay. Fluoride works best on the smooth surfaces of teeth. The chewing surfaces on the back teeth, however, have tiny grooves where decay often begins. Sealants keep germs out of the grooves by covering them with a safe plastic coating. Sealants and fluorides work together to prevent tooth decay.

Are sealants safe and effective?

Yes. Dental sealants have been used for more than 40 years, and clinical studies have shown sealants to be very effective in reducing tooth decay in children. Dental sealants are safe, effective and very economical.



Before Sealant



Sealant Procedure



After Sealant