

Fluoride Varnish Treatments and Your Child

What is fluoride varnish?

- A dental treatment that **prevents and slows tooth decay (cavities)**
- A coating painted on the surfaces of the teeth

How does fluoride help teeth?

- When teeth are growing, it mixes with tooth enamel, the hard coating on teeth, to make them harder and more resistant to decay or cavities
- It works with saliva to protect tooth enamel from plaque and sugar

Is fluoride varnish safe?

- It is quick, easy, and safe for children of all ages
- It does not hurt
- It hardens fast, almost no fluoride is swallowed

How long does fluoride varnish last?

- It lasts several months
- It works best when reapplied between 2 and 4 times each year

To protect the fluoride covering:

- It is okay to eat and drink warm (not hot) or cold liquids and soft foods right away after the treatment
- Sticky or crunchy foods and hot liquids should be avoided for 24 hours
- Teeth should not be brushed or flossed until the next day

What to expect after a fluoride varnish treatment:

- Teeth may look a little yellow or dull for the next 24 – 48 hours
- Your child's teeth will still need regular brushing, flossing and dental checkups