



# Information for Parents About Fluoride Varnish

## Why do we recommend putting fluoride varnish on children's teeth?

Tooth decay is one of the most common preventable diseases seen in children. Children as young as 12 - 18 months can get cavities. Cavities in baby teeth can cause pain and even prevent children from being able to eat, speak, sleep and learn properly. Children do not lose all their baby teeth until they are about 11 or 12 years old.

## What is fluoride varnish?

Fluoride varnish is a temporary protective coating that is painted on teeth to help prevent new cavities and to help stop cavities that have already started.

## Is fluoride varnish safe?

Yes, fluoride varnish can be used on babies from the time they have their first teeth. Only a very small amount of fluoride varnish is used. This method of providing fluoride to teeth has been used in Europe for more than 25 years.

## How is it put on the teeth?

The varnish is painted on the teeth. It is quick and easy to apply and does not have a bad taste. There is no pain, but your child may cry just because children don't like having things put in their mouths, especially by people they don't know! Your child's teeth will be yellow after the fluoride varnish is painted on, but the yellow color will come off when you brush your child's teeth tomorrow.

## How long does the fluoride last?

The fluoride coating will work best if it is painted on the teeth 3 - 4 times a year.

## Baby Teeth are Important! For:

- Chewing healthy foods.
- Speech development.
- Guiding the permanent teeth into place.
- Help with jaw and facial formation.
- For your baby's good health.
- For a pretty smile!

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