

# Fluoride Varnish



## WHY DO WE RECOMMEND PUTTING FLUORIDE VARNISH ON CHILDREN'S TEETH?

- Tooth decay is one of the most common preventable diseases in children.
- Children as young as 9 months can get cavities.
- Cavities in baby teeth can make eating, speaking, sleeping and learning difficult.
- Children do not lose all of their baby teeth until they are about 11 to 12 years old.
- Fluoride varnish can reduce cavities by 40%.

## IS FLUORIDE VARNISH SAFE?

- Yes! Fluoride varnish is Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved and American Dental Association endorsed.
- Fluoride varnish is non-toxic and can be used on baby teeth.

## WHAT IS FLUORIDE VARNISH?

- Fluoride varnish is a protective varnish that is applied on teeth.
- Fluoride varnish helps prevent new cavities and can help stop some cavities that have just barely started.

## HOW IS FLUORIDE VARNISH PUT ON TEETH?

- The varnish is applied on the teeth with a small brush.
- It is quick, easy, painless, and tasteless.

## HOW LONG DOES THE FLUORIDE VARNISH LAST?

- Very small amounts of the varnish remain on the teeth and release fluoride for 4-6 months.
- The fluoride varnish can be applied every 4-6 months.

## Instructions for Care After Treatment

After the application of the fluoride varnish, your child will feel a coating and may notice a difference in the color of their teeth. To obtain the maximum benefit from the fluoride varnish, follow these simple steps:

- Do not remove the fluoride varnish by brushing or flossing for at least 4-6 hours
- If possible, wait until the next morning to resume normal oral hygiene
- Eat soft foods and avoid hot drinks and products that contain alcohol (i.e. mouth washes/ oral rises) until after your child brushes their teeth.

## WHAT IF MY CHILD SEES THE DENTIST TWICE A YEAR?

Their teeth can still be varnished! Dentists varnish during cleanings, but fluoride varnish can be applied up to four times a year.

## How to Prevent Cavities

- Supervise your child's daily toothbrushing.
- Don't put anything into your mouth and then into your child's mouth. (i.e. pacifier) This can spread bacteria to the child's mouth that can cause cavities. Cavities are contagious!
- Avoid soda and sugary drinks, as they are major sources of cavities. Sugary liquids in bottles can lead to early childhood cavities. Infants should finish their bedtime and nap time bottles before going to bed. Encourage your child to drink from a cup by his/her first birthday.
- Visit your dentist regularly - ideally, twice a year.
- Ask your doctor or dentist about fluoride tablets and fluoride varnish.
- Start cleaning your child's teeth at a young age (9 months to 2 years) with a clean washcloth or soft toothbrush.

