

How is a sealant applied?

- ♥ The tooth is cleaned and dried.
- ♥ A solution is put on the tooth to make the surface rough. (This helps the sealant stick to the tooth.)
- ♥ The tooth is rinsed and dried again.
- ♥ The sealant is applied as a liquid.
- ♥ A special light hardens it in a few seconds.
- ♥ The sealant is ready to protect the tooth from decay.



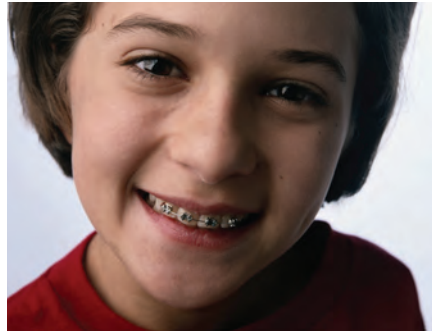
Are sealants expensive?

No! Sealing a tooth costs less than filling it. Many insurance companies pay for sealants, which can last several years. However, remember they should be checked at your routine dental appointment and repaired, if needed.

Are there other ways to prevent tooth decay?

Yes! By brushing with a fluoride toothpaste, flossing, and drinking fluoridated water, you can limit tooth decay. But, if you combine these methods with the use of sealants, you can prevent almost all tooth decay.

**Sealants + Fluoride =
Your Best Protection
Against Cavities**



For more information about dental sealants, contact your dentist or:

**DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH**

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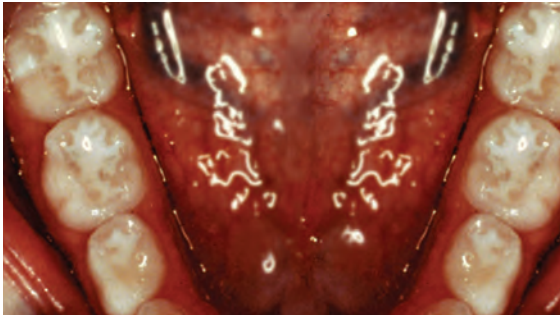
Put a Seal on Dental Decay



A Parent's Guide About Sealants

What are dental sealants?

Dental sealants (sealant) are thin, plastic coatings that cover the chewing surfaces of the back teeth. These plastic coverings form seals over teeth to block food from getting trapped in the deep crevices found on chewing surfaces. Sealants are painted on in a liquid form and harden to create barriers that protect young teeth from decay on the sealed surface.



Who needs sealants?

Children should get sealants on their permanent molars as soon as the teeth come in.

- ♥ Children get their first permanent molars between the ages of 5 and 7.
- ♥ Children get their second permanent molars between the ages of 11 and 13.
- ♥ “Bicuspid” or “premolars,” which are in front of the molars, may also need to be sealed.

My child brushes and flosses every day. Does he/she need sealants?

Yes! The grooves on the chewing surface of your child’s teeth are too deep for brushing to remove all particles. Food and germs get trapped in the small pits of the tooth, and the bristles of the toothbrush cannot reach them. The trapped food can cause decay.

Applying a sealant solves this problem by forming a hard layer on the surface of the tooth, keeping food and germs from getting into the deep crevices.

Brushing and flossing are not enough!

Sealants add the extra protection that young teeth need.



Baby teeth are like “space savers” for adult teeth. Keeping them healthy will help the adult teeth to come in straight.

Should sealants be put on baby teeth?

Your dentist may recommend sealants for your child’s baby teeth if they have deep grooves where food and germs could get trapped. It is important to keep baby teeth healthy so they aren’t lost early. Early tooth loss could mean the possible need for orthodontics and other costly treatments.

Where do I get sealants?

Sealants can be applied at your dentist’s office, health clinics, and in some schools. Getting sealants is quick, easy, and painless.