

What are dental sealants?

- Dental sealants are thin plastic coatings that are put onto the chewing surfaces of the back teeth.
- Sealants are painted on the top of the back teeth and harden to form a shield over the tooth.

Why should my child get sealants?

- As the back teeth grow, pits and grooves form on the top of the teeth. Food and germs get caught in the grooves and cause the teeth to get cavities.
- Brushing teeth does not remove all the food and germs stuck in the grooves.
- Dental sealants fill in the grooves and help the teeth stay clean.

When should my child get sealants?

- When your child starts getting their first molars (back teeth) at about the age of 6 or 7. Apply them again around the age of 11 to the second molars when they come in.

How are sealants put on?



1. The tooth is cleaned with a dry toothbrush.



2. The tooth is dried, and cotton is put around the tooth to keep it dry.



3. A liquid is put on the tooth to make the surface rough. It helps the sealant stick to the tooth.



4. The tooth is rinsed and dried. New cotton is put around the tooth to keep it dry.



5. The sealant is applied in liquid form and hardens in a few seconds. A special light is used to help dry the sealant.



6. The new sealant is in place & the dentist or hygienist checks to make sure it covers all the grooves in the tooth.

Questions & Answers

Q: Does it hurt to have sealants put on teeth?

A: No, getting sealants is painless. No drilling or shots are used. Sealants take about five minutes per tooth. As soon as they dry, normal activities are fine.

Q: How long will sealants last?

A: Sealants can last up to ten years or longer if they are applied correctly and teeth are properly cared for.

Q: How do dental sealants prevent cavities?

A: Dental sealants fill the pits and grooves of the teeth. The teeth are easier to keep clean because food is brushed away easier with a toothbrush.

Q: How much do sealants cost?

A: Usually a sealant costs less than filling a tooth that has a cavity. Some dental professionals offer a sliding fee and most insurance companies cover sealants.

Q: Is brushing still important when teeth have sealants on them?

A: Yes, brush and floss every day! You still have to work on keeping your teeth and gums clean and healthy.