

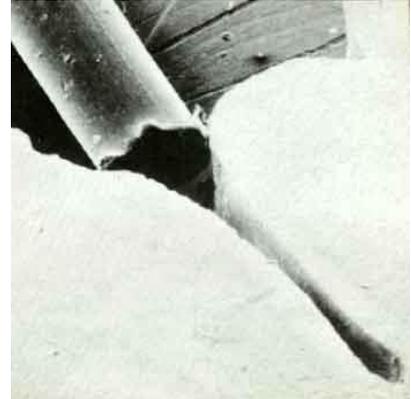


What are dental sealants?

Dental sealants are thin plastic coatings which are applied to the chewing surfaces of the molars (back teeth). Most tooth decay in children and teens occurs in these surfaces. Sealants cover the chewing surfaces to prevent decay. Our sealant material used at Taylor Dentistry does not contain BPA.

Which teeth are suitable for sealants?

Permanent molars are the most likely to benefit from sealant application. First molars usually come into the mouth when a child is about 6 years of age. Second molars appear at about age 12. It is best if the sealant is applied soon after the molars have erupted, before the teeth have a chance to decay. For that reason, children between the ages of 5 and 15 benefit most from sealants.



How are sealants applied?

Applying sealants does not require drilling or removing tooth structure. It is an easy three-step process: A dentist or dental hygienist cleans the tooth with a special toothpaste. A special cleansing liquid, on a tiny piece of cotton, is rubbed gently on the tooth and is washed off. Finally, the sealant is painted on the tooth. It takes about a minute for the sealant to form a protective shield.

Are sealants visible?

Upon close examination sealants can be seen. Sealants can be clear, white, or slightly tinted. Because they are used only on the back teeth, sealants cannot be seen when a child talks or smiles.

Will sealants make teeth feel different?

Like anything new that is placed in the mouth, a child may feel the sealant with the tongue. Sealants, however, are very thin and only fill the pits and grooves on molar teeth.



How long will sealants last?

One sealant application can last for as long as 5 to 10 years. Sealants should be checked regularly, and reapplied if they are no longer in place.

Will sealants replace fluoride?

No...fluorides, such as those used in community water, toothpaste, and mouthrinse also help to prevent decay. Fluoride works best on the smooth surfaces of teeth. The chewing surfaces on the back teeth, however, have tiny grooves where decay often begins. Sealants keep germs out of the grooves by covering them with a safe plastic coating. Sealants and fluorides work together to prevent tooth decay.

How do sealants fit into a preventive dentistry program?

Sealants should be used as part of a child's total preventive dental care. A complete preventive dental program includes use of sealants, fluoride, plaque removal, careful food choices, and regular dental care.

Why is sealing a tooth better than waiting for decay and filling the cavity?

Sealants help maintain sound, intact teeth. Decay destroys the structure of the tooth. Each time a tooth is filled or a filling is replaced, additional tooth structure is lost. Fillings last an average of 6 to 8 years before they need to be replaced. Appropriate use of sealants can save time, money, and the discomfort associated with dental treatment procedures.



The text information was from the Centers for Disease Control.

