



Community Dental Services Whittington Health NHS

Fluoride varnish

After care instructions A guide for children and parents



Why is Fluoride recommended?

Fluoride is a naturally occurring mineral and has an important role in strengthening the outside layer of teeth (enamel).

- Fluoride occurs naturally in some water supplies, but in other parts of the country it is added to prevent dental decay.
- Fluoride can also be found in toothpaste and other oral health products.
- Fluoride varnish is an effective way to protect your child's teeth.

What is a fluoride varnish?

- A fluoride varnish is a paste placed by the dentist on your child's teeth.
- It sticks to the tooth surface for a long period (12 hours or more) in a thin layer and slowly releases the fluoride to help your child's teeth stay strong and healthy.

Is fluoride varnish safe?

Fluoride varnishes are safe (despite the high fluoride concentration), because only a small amount is used to treat a child.

When should my child have fluoride varnish applied?

It is recommended to apply fluoride varnish be applied between 2-4 times a year, depending on the decay risk, for children and young people (0-18 years)



Aftercare instructions

It is important that the fluoride varnish remains on the teeth for as long as possible, to provide the most benefit.

- Your child's teeth may look yellow for a little while, but this will not last.
- Your child should avoid eating or drinking for 30 minutes after the fluoride varnish has been applied.
- Your child should eat a soft diet for the rest of the day.
- **Do not brush your child's teeth tonight.**
- Continue brushing tomorrow morning as normal.
- **Your child should not take other fluoride tablets, gels, rinses for seven days after the application.**

**Remember! To keep a healthy smile, brush twice a day for two minutes with a fluoride toothpaste. To increase its protective effect-
"Spit - don't rinse"!**

Resources:

Delivering Better Oral health <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/delivering-better-oral-health-an-evidence-based-toolkit-for-prevention>

British society of Paediatric Dentistry: <https://www.bspd.co.uk/Resources>

Cochrane Oral Health Group:

<https://www.cochranelibrary.com/cdsr/doi/10.1002/14651858.CD002279.pub2/full>

Scottish Dental Effectiveness group:

<http://www.sdcep.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/SDCEP-Prevention-and-Management-of-Dental-Caries-in-Children-2nd-Edition.pdf>

Photo is courtesy of the Scottish Dental effectiveness group.

Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)

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If you need a large print, audio or translated copy of this leaflet please email whh-tr.patient-information@nhs.net. We will try our best to meet your needs.

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