



Sealants

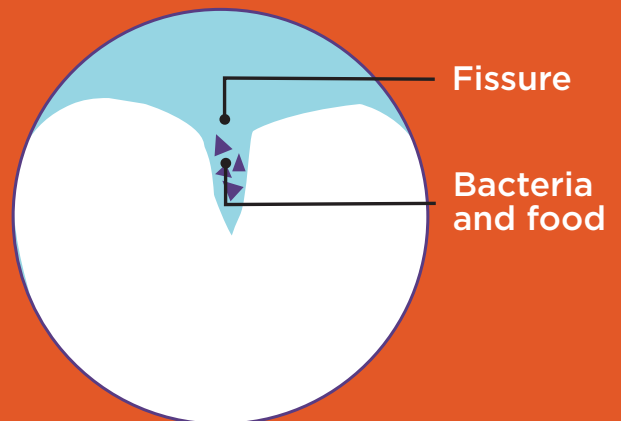
Also known as: Pit and fissure sealants • Fissure sealants • Dental sealants

Want to avoid cavities?

Consider sealants. This simple procedure is an effective tool in preventing tooth decay.

What are sealants?

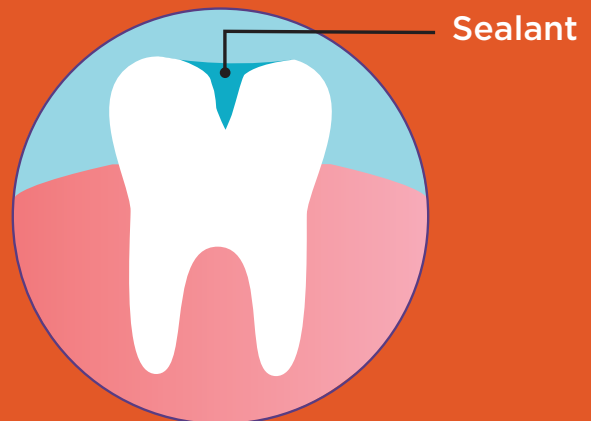
Sealants are plastic coverings applied to the deep crevices of teeth to seal them off from decay. These grooves in the teeth, known as **pits and fissures**, are hard to reach with a toothbrush and can be vulnerable to decay. Sealants close off these areas so they can't collect food particles and bacteria.



Who needs them?

Children and teenagers ages six to 15 are the best candidates for sealants. Sealants can be a great preventive measure for all children, but may be especially beneficial to kids who:

- had cavities in their baby teeth
- have a family history of dental problems
- take medications or have health conditions that cause dry mouth (such as asthma)
- are exposed to second-hand smoke
- don't drink fluoridated water



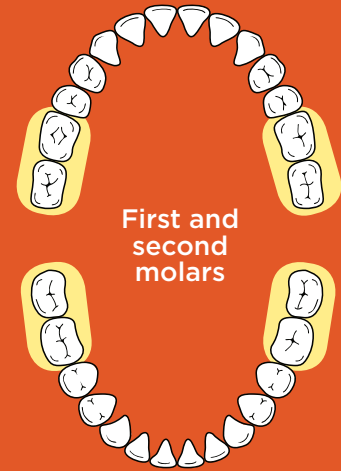
Did you know?

A sealant can last up to 10 years!

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Which teeth need sealants?

First and second permanent molars are the best candidates for sealants, because they have the deepest grooves and are at the highest risk of decay. Sealants should be applied as soon as the teeth grow in, before cavities can form.



Isn't fluoride enough?

Fluoride is a powerful tool in the fight against tooth decay, but it can't do everything. Teeth with deep pits and fissures can still trap bacteria and develop cavities, even with regular brushing and fluoride treatments. The most effective way to stop decay is to combine the power of fluoride and sealants.

What are sealants made of?

Sealants are made of a resin-based plastic, just like tooth-colored fillings.



How are sealants applied?

1. The tooth is thoroughly cleaned and kept dry with cotton.
2. The dentist or hygienist applies a special solution to help the sealant bond to the tooth, then rinses and dries the tooth.
3. The sealant is painted on the tooth with a small brush and then hardened by shining a blue light.

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