



Seal-a-Smile

The first step to a healthy mouth is preventing tooth decay. Sealants can offer major protection against cavities.

What are Dental Sealants?

Dental sealants are a thin plastic coating that is painted on the chewing surfaces or grooved areas of the back teeth or molars. Sealants protect these grooves by “sealing out” plaque and food, protecting the tooth enamel from plaque and acids. With proper care like tooth brushing and dental visits, sealants are nearly 100% effective in preventing cavities on these surfaces and can last up to 10 years. Application of sealants is safe, simple, and painless.

How are Dental Sealants Applied?

Dental sealants are placed by a dental professional and work best when placed on first and second permanent molars, which appear at approximately 6 and 12 years of age. The tooth surfaces that will be sealed are cleaned and roughened with an etching solution to help the sealant stick to the tooth. The sealant is then painted onto the grooves of the back teeth. A special light is used to help the sealant harden.

Are Dental Sealants Safe?

Dental sealants are completely safe and are recommended by the American Dental Association and the US Surgeon General.

Who Should Get Sealants?

Children should get sealants on their permanent molars as soon as the teeth come in, before any decay attacks the teeth. The first permanent molars, called “6 year molars”, come in between the ages of 11 and 14. Other teeth with pits and grooves called “premolars” or “bicuspids”, located right in front of the molars, also may need a sealant.

Teenagers and young adults without decay or fillings in their molars may also get sealants.

Where Can My Child Get Dental Sealants?

Check with your dentist, local health department, or your child’s school to see if they have a dental sealant program.



Sealants and fluoride together can prevent nearly 100% of all tooth decay.



For more information, please contact:

- Northwoods Dental Project
715-891-6944
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- Vilas County Public Health Department
715-479-3656
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- Oneida County Public Health Department
715-369-6111
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- Forest County Public Health Department
715-478-3371