

Dental Sealants for Sunny Smiles



One out of five children and one in seven adolescents have at least one cavity on a permanent tooth.

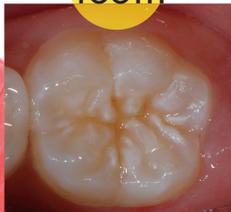
Approximately 90% of tooth decay in permanent teeth occurs in the chewing surfaces of back teeth (molars).

Dental sealants can help prevent permanent teeth from getting cavities.

What is a sealant?

A sealant is a thin plastic coating that keeps food and germs off of the chewing surfaces of teeth. Sealants can protect against 85% of chewing surface cavities.

UNSEALED
TOOTH



SEALED
TOOTH



Photos courtesy of Edward Zapert, D.M.D.

What color are sealants?

Sealants may be clear, white or tinted. Most people will not be able to see the sealant when a child smiles or talks.

Which teeth are sealed?

Molars and premolars that help us chew our food. These teeth must last a lifetime!

Do sealants last a lifetime?

Sealants will generally last about five years—some longer. If part of a sealant is lost, it must be replaced for the tooth to remain sealed.

Teeth that have sealants need to be checked during routine dental visits to make sure that the sealant is in place.



Dental sealants



keep children healthy & ready to learn.

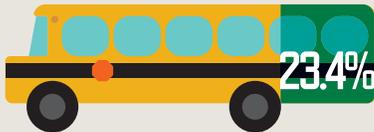
Sealants decrease dental caries & can yield up to an

88%

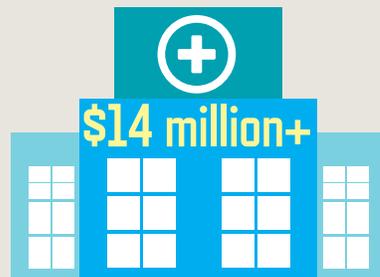
return on investment.



Every \$1 spent on dental sealants, saves \$1.88 in fillings.



About 23.4% of Florida third graders have untreated tooth decay.



There were 12,906 caries-related emergency department visits costing more than \$14 million in 2014.

PREVENTION vs. TREATMENT



Tooth Decay: The Problem

Tooth decay is the single most common chronic childhood disease.¹ Florida data reveals that approximately 1 in 4 (23.4%) third grade children aged 5 to 11 years have untreated tooth decay (caries).² Untreated tooth decay is higher for racial and ethnic minorities and children from low-income families. These children are less likely to receive preventive dental care.

Untreated tooth decay is painful and keeps children from school. Children with poor oral health are three times more likely to miss school due to oral health problems.³ Pain and infection from caries, toothaches, and abscesses can also affect children's ability to focus in school.⁴

Caries-related Emergency Department (ED) visits in Florida totaled 12,906 and for children ages 0–20 during 2014. The charges associated with these 12,906 visits totaled \$14,153,360.⁵

Dental Sealants: The Solution

Dental sealants effectively reduce tooth decay in children.

Dental sealants are thin plastic coatings applied to the grooves on the chewing surfaces of the back teeth.⁶ This protection against tooth decay reduces caries incidence over time: 86.0% (year one), 78.6% (year two), and 71.2% (year three).⁷

Prevention vs. Treatment: The Cost

The Florida Department of Health's Public Health Dental Program supports statewide preventive dental services through County Health Department dental programs. Dental sealants performed by these locations during 2014 were analyzed for cost effectiveness, by comparing the cost of receiving one dental sealant (\$44.12) to the cost of one dental filling (\$197.09) on an unsealed tooth.⁸ The cost savings over three years for 36,955 children receiving one dental sealant is \$2,388,355.

Learn more: FloridaHealth.gov/Dental



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6. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2013). Dental Sealants. Retrieved October 19, 2015 from: <http://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/publications/faqs/sealants.htm>.

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8. American Dental Association. (2014). Action for Dental Health: Bringing Disease Prevention into Communities. A Statement from the American Dental Association. 2013.