

Fluoride Varnish: Frequently Asked Questions

What is fluoride varnish?

Fluoride varnish is a protective coating that is applied to teeth to help prevent cavities.

Why is fluoride varnish recommended?

Cavities can cause pain and infections, which can lead to problems eating, speaking, playing and learning. Fluoride varnish makes teeth stronger, stops cavities from getting worse and helps prevent new cavities from forming.

Is fluoride varnish safe?

Yes, fluoride varnish is safe to apply at any age, even on babies when their first teeth come in. If you have questions or concerns about using fluoride varnish, talk to your health care provider or dentist. Children should begin dental visits by age 1.

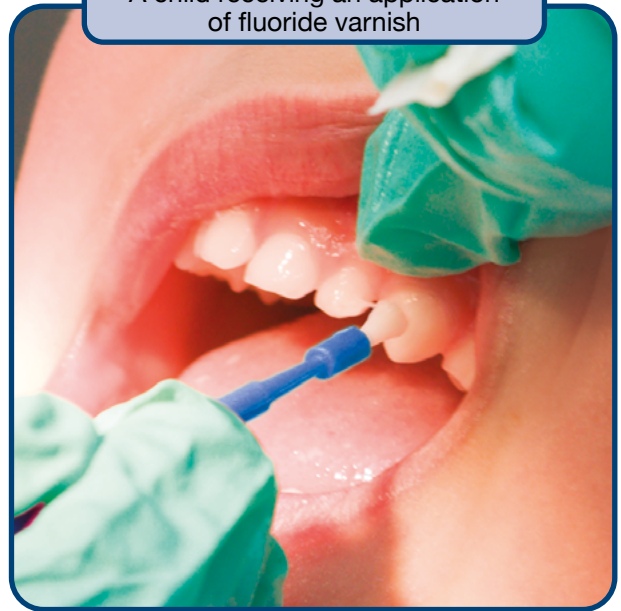
How is fluoride varnish applied?

Fluoride varnish is painted on teeth with a brush by a dentist, dental hygienist, doctor or nurse. The process is quick and easy and does not cause pain or leave a bad taste. The varnish sticks to the teeth and may leave a thin, temporary coating. This is normal and will go away when the teeth are brushed.

How long does fluoride varnish last?

Fluoride varnish protects teeth for several months. It works best when reapplied every three to six months.

A child receiving an application of fluoride varnish



Can I eat, drink or brush my teeth normally after fluoride varnish is applied?

You can eat and drink after fluoride varnish is applied, but avoid hot, hard or sticky foods for the rest of the day. Wait until the next morning to brush your teeth.

Is fluoride varnish covered by insurance?

Most dental insurance providers, including Medicaid and Child Health Plus, cover fluoride varnish application. For help enrolling in or renewing health insurance, call **311** or 347-665-0214 or visit nyc.gov/health/healthcoverage. For help finding a low-cost dental provider near you, call **311** or visit nyc.gov/health/map.

For more information about oral health, visit nyc.gov/health/teeth.