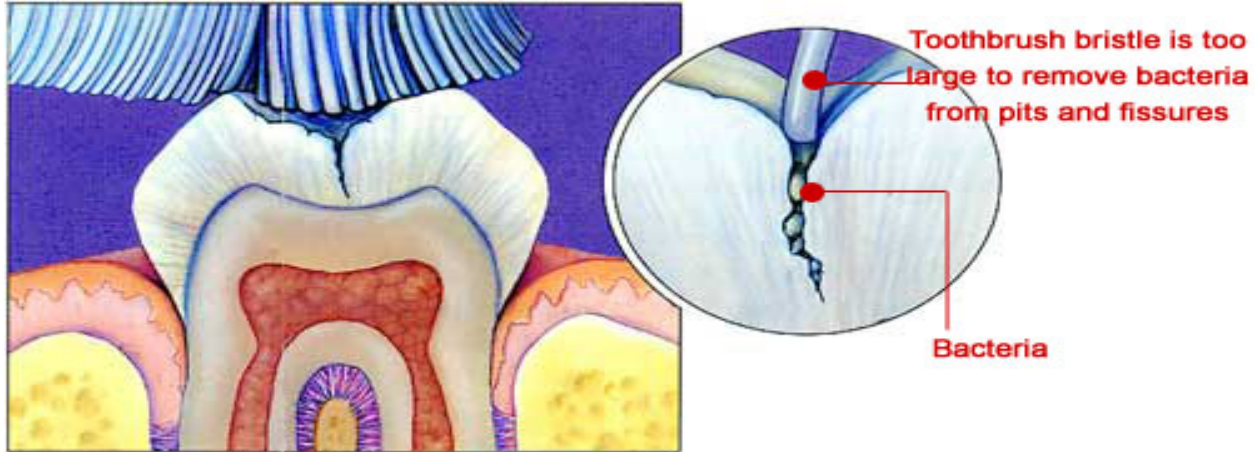


Dental Sealant

Dental sealants are considered one of the greatest advances in modern dentistry. The widespread use of fluoride beginning in childhood has greatly reduced the incidence of cavities, but fluoride does little to protect the grooves of the teeth. Sealants in conjunction with topical and systemic fluoride provide the maximum protection against tooth decay. Sealants prevent tooth decay because the plastic coating keeps bacteria and food debris from entering the pit and fissures (grooves) of the teeth.



A dental sealant is a clear plastic material that is applied to the chewing surfaces of the back teeth. Sealants are applied after the tooth is fully erupted. Sealants can be applied to both permanent and primary teeth. The natural flow of saliva usually keeps the smooth surfaces of teeth clean, but does not wash out the grooves in the teeth. Because these teeth have depressions and grooves on their chewing surfaces, they are difficult to clean. By protecting the depressions and grooves with a sealant, we can dramatically reduce the risk of decay for children and teens.

Teeth mostly at risk are the permanent 6 and 12-year-old molars. Other teeth that may be at risk are the permanent premolars (bicuspid) as well as the primary molars. Any tooth with grooves may benefit from the protection of sealants.

The application of a dental sealant is quick and pain free. First the tooth is cleaned and then dried. The sealant material is painted onto the grooves of the tooth and hardened with a special light. The sealant is a thin material that doesn't interfere with eating, chewing, talking, singing, playing a musical instrument, or smiling. In fact, no one, not even your child will know or feel that there is a sealant on a tooth. Sealants last for years and can be reapplied if found to be rough or cracked. Your child will brush and floss as usual.

*When your child has dental sealants they should avoid foods that are hard, sticky or chewy such as:

Chewing Ice Cubes, Jolly Ranchers,

Now n' Laters, Caramels, Fruit Snacks,

Fruit Roll-Ups, Gummi Bears, Chewing Gum

PLEASE follow this list to insure the longevity of the sealants.

