

# Information for Parents About Fluoride Varnish



## **What is fluoride varnish?**

Fluoride varnish is one type of topical fluoride. This type of fluoride is painted on the teeth. Fluoride varnish helps to prevent cavities by putting minerals into the tooth enamel, making the tooth stronger.

## **Why do we recommend putting fluoride varnish on children's teeth?**

Cavities are one of the most common preventable diseases seen in children. Cavities can cause pain and affect children's ability to eat, speak, sleep and learn properly. Fluoride varnish is used to help prevent new cavities and to help stop cavities that have already started.

## **Is fluoride varnish safe?**

Yes, fluoride varnish can be used on babies from the time they have their first teeth. Only a very small amount of fluoride varnish is used and little or no fluoride is swallowed by the child. Fluoride varnish is endorsed by the American Dental Association. Although rare, children with allergies to colophony (colophonium) and pine nuts could have allergic reactions to fluoride varnish.

## **How is it put on the teeth?**

The varnish is painted on the teeth. It is quick and easy to apply and does not have a bad taste. Your child's teeth may be dull or yellow after the fluoride varnish is painted on. This is normal, and your child's teeth will be white and shiny again once the fluoride varnish is brushed off the next morning!