

# INTRODUCTION

Cavities are the single most common chronic disease in children. They cause pain and force children in the US to miss more than 52 million hours of school each year. But cavities can be prevented. Regular brushing with fluoride toothpaste, flossing and drinking tap water with fluoride helps to fight cavities. But brushing and flossing are not always enough. Sometimes it is hard for children to brush the grooves of the back teeth and reach tiny particles of food. This can lead to cavities. That's why Dental Sealants are important.

Dental Sealants are thin, plastic coatings that are painted on the chewing surfaces of the back teeth. These teeth are most likely to form cavities because sugar gets trapped in the grooves of the teeth.



Dental Sealants are put on in dentists' offices, clinics, and sometimes in schools. In Maryland, dentists and public health dental hygienists can provide sealants in school settings with parental consent.

To learn more about dental sealants, talk to your dental or medical provider, visit

[www.Mightytooth.com](http://www.Mightytooth.com)



or contact the Office of Oral Health,  
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Office of  
Oral Health

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene



Larry Hogan, Governor | Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor | Van Mitchell, Secretary



## MIGHTY TOOTH

### MARYLAND'S

### DENTAL SEALANT PROGRAM

The services and facilities of the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) are operated on a non-discriminatory basis. This policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, or national origin and applies to the provisions of employment and granting of advantages, privileges, and accommodations.

The Department, in compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act, ensures that qualified individuals with disabilities are given an opportunity to participate in and benefit from DHMH services, programs, benefits, and employment opportunities.

Visit us @ [www.mightytooth.com](http://www.mightytooth.com) for more information on dental sealants.

## Seal Away Tooth Decay!



# MIGHTY TOOTH

## SEAL AWAY TOOTH DECAY!

- ◆ Tooth decay is the most common chronic disease found in Maryland and U.S. children.
- ◆ Children with poor oral health are nearly 3 times more likely to miss school due to dental pain, than healthier children.
- ◆ In addition to brushing with fluoride toothpaste, flossing and drinking tap water that contains fluoride, dental sealants are an important way to prevent cavities.
- ◆ Prevention pays off - the cost of applying a dental sealant on a child's permanent molar is much less than the cost of filling a cavity.

### How Sealants are Applied

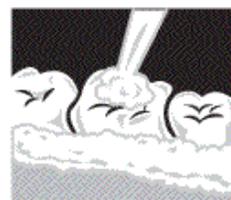
Getting dental sealants put on is simple, painless and only takes a few minutes. Sealants are painted on as a liquid and quickly harden to form a protective shield over the tooth.



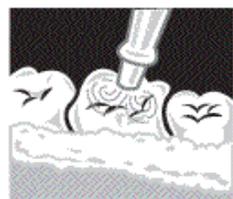
1. The tooth is cleaned.



2. The tooth is dried, and cotton is put around the tooth so it stays dry.



3. A solution is put on the tooth that makes the surface a little rough. (It is easier for the sealant to stick to a slightly rough surface.)



4. The tooth is rinsed and dried. Then new cotton is put around the tooth so it stays dry.



5. The sealant is applied in liquid form and hardens in a few seconds.



6. The sealant is in place.

### What are dental sealants?

Dental sealants are thin, plastic coatings painted on the chewing surfaces of the teeth to prevent tooth decay.

### Why get sealants?

To avoid cavities and help keep the mouth healthy.



### Who needs sealants?

Children, specifically those who may be prone to cavities, should get dental sealants on their permanent molars (back teeth) as soon as the teeth come in – before cavities occur.

### When should children get dental sealants?

Children should get dental sealants between ages 5 and 7 when their first permanent molars come in and between ages 11 and 14, when their second permanent molars come in.

### How long do sealants last?

Sealants protect teeth as long as they stay in place. They generally last a few years and will hold up well against everyday chewing, flossing, and brushing. It is important to get them checked at least once a year.

### Where can my child get sealants?

Children can receive dental sealants at their dental office, in clinics and sometimes in schools. Check with your school or public health program to find out if it has a dental sealant program.