health net™

Give Your Child the Best Chance for Healthy Teeth and Seal Out Decay!

To have healthy teeth, it is important to prevent decay.

Sealants can protect your child's teeth against cavities.

What is a sealant?

A sealant is a thin plastic coating brushed on the chewing surface of the back teeth.

Sealants:

- Keep food and bacteria away from the grooves of these teeth.
- Protect the teeth from bacteria and acids.
  - Bacteria can change the sugar and starch from food into harmful acids that damage the teeth and cause cavities.
- Keep plaque, food, and acids from the grooves of the back teeth.

Who should get sealants?

All children should have sealants placed on their back teeth as soon as the tooth becomes visible. Sealants can only go on teeth that do not have cavities. That is why it matters to take your child to the dentist every 6 months to have sealants applied as soon as the back teeth show up.

How are sealants put onto teeth?

Your dentist will place sealants on your child's teeth. Sealants are easy to apply, and it only takes a few minutes. After a cleaning, the sealant goes onto the grooves of the back teeth, and it hardens. Sometimes, a special light is used to help harden the sealant. This procedure is not painful.

Early warning signs of tooth decay

If your child has any of these signs, you should call your dentist. Remember that your child needs to see a dentist twice a year for routine care.

- Small white spots on teeth.
- Tiny holes in enamel.
- Tooth sensitive to heat, cold or sweets.
- Swelling of the face.
- Pain in mouth.
- Tooth painful or sensitive when chewing.

If you need help to find a dentist or have questions about your dental benefits, visit **www.hndental.com** or call:

Los Angeles County members:
1-844-233-4522

Sacramento County members:
1-833-493-0428

Hours: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. PT
TDD/TTY users should dial
1-800-466-7566.

Source and website:

5th Edition Handbook of Pediatric Dentistry. American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD), www.aapd.org.

This information is not meant to replace medical or dental care. Please always follow your healthcare provider's instructions.

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