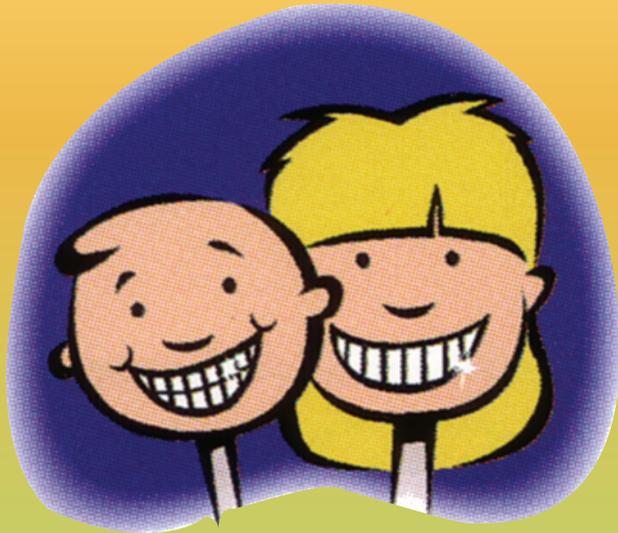


**What are**

**Fissure Sealants?**



# Fissure Sealants

## Q. What are fissure sealants?

- A. Fissure sealants are a safe and painless way of protecting your children's teeth from tooth decay. It is a plastic coating which covers the chewing surfaces of the back adult teeth. The sealant forms a hard shield that keeps food and bacteria from getting into the tiny grooves in the teeth. Most tooth decay in children occurs in the back teeth.

## Q. How are fissure sealants applied?

- A. It is quick and straight forward taking only a few minutes per tooth. A dentist or dental hygienist will clean and prepare the tooth with a special solution. The tooth is dried with air. The liquid is then applied and set hard using a special light. It is pain free.



## Q. Can sealants be seen on the teeth?

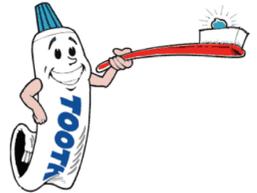
- A. They can be clear or white in colour. Because they are on the back teeth, they cannot be seen when a child talks or smiles.

**Q. How long do they last?**

**A.** They can last for many years and the dentist may check them at each check-up visit. They can wear over time and the dentist or dental hygienist may add or replace some sealant.

**Q. Do children still have to clean their teeth?**

**A.** Yes. Sealants are only one part of a child's preventative dental care. It is still important that teeth are brushed twice a day with fluoride toothpaste. The sealed surfaces will now be easier to clean when toothbrushing. It is also important that children don't eat a lot of sugary foods and drinks especially between meals. These should be kept as treats or for special occasions.



**Q. What do fissure sealants look like?**



Tooth with NO fissure sealant.



Tooth WITH fissure sealant

Fissure sealants are only one way of helping to prevent tooth decay.

Remember also to:

- 😊 Brush teeth and gums every morning and night.
- 😊 Use a pea size amount of fluoride toothpaste.
- 😊 Brush for 3 minutes (the length of a song).
- 😊 Don't eat a lot of sugary foods and drinks especially between meals. Keep these foods as treats or for special occasions.
- 😊 Make sure you keep your dental appointments.



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

Oral Health Promotion Team  
Coolock Health Centre