

Prevention in Action: Dental Sealants

Non-Dental Team Member Breakout Group

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Missouri Oral Health Coalition

Who are you?

- Medical provider (MD, RN, etc.)
- Medical support team (MA, etc.)
- Operations team (COO, operation managers, etc.)
- Other

The Mouth is the Window to the Body

- *You can't be healthy if you have bad teeth!*
- When oral tissues are compromised, can be a source of disease that does not stop at the mouth
- Increased evidence showing oral health impact of systemic health and vice versa
 - Pregnancy outcomes
 - Diabetes
 - Heart disease
 - HIV
 - Respiratory disease
 - Osteoporosis

Dental Decay (Caries)

Time

Bacteria

Susceptible
tooth

Fermentable
carbohydrates

80% of dental caries
occur in pits and
fissures!

Consequences of Caries

Long Term Consequences

Short Term Consequences

Pain and discomfort
Premature tooth loss
Tooth mobility
Infection in the mouth

Delayed development/growth
Malnutrition
Disruption in relationships,
education, etc.
Spread of infection
Lowered self-confidence

Polling!

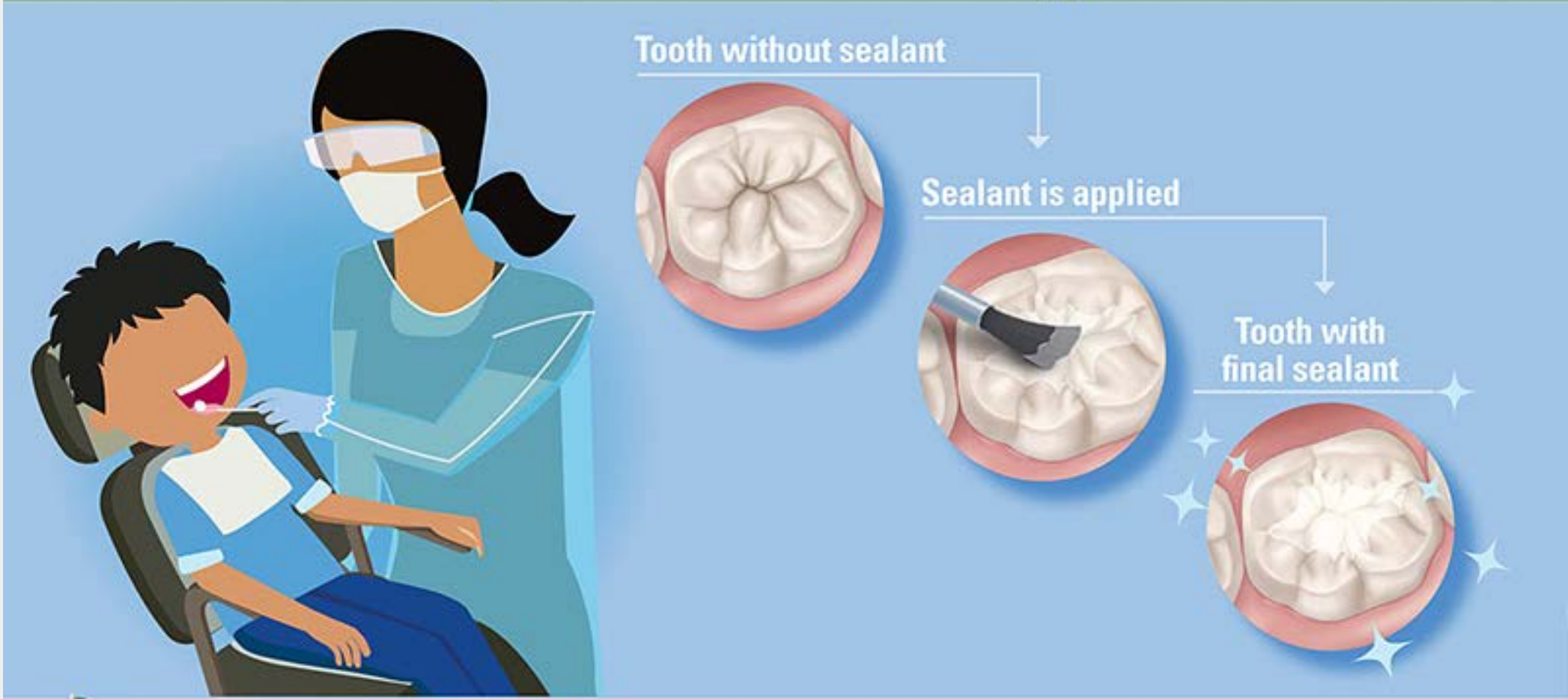
- My experience with dental sealants is...
 - I have at least 1 sealant
 - I have family members/children that have sealants
 - I talk to my patients about sealants and recommend them!
 - I don't know what a sealant is

What are dental sealants?

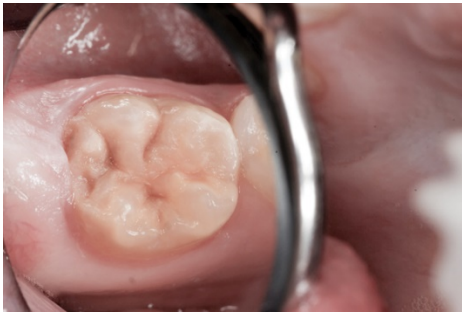


- Protective coating applied on the chewing surface of teeth
- Usually made from resin materials
- Covers the pits and fissures of the tooth to prevent bacteria/food from getting stuck
- Sealants are painless and do not require any anesthesia

Dental sealants can prevent cavities when applied to molar teeth.



Resin Sealant Placement



Tooth surface is
cleaned



Acid etch applied
on surface of
tooth, rinsed,
and dried



Sealant material
is applied



Light cure the
sealant

Who can get sealants?

- Anyone!
- Especially recommended for children with permanent molars
 - First permanent molars appear around age 6
 - Second permanent molars appear around age 12
 - Best applied when the molars first erupt
- Sealants are usually covered by dental insurance for children!

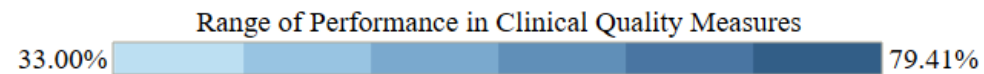
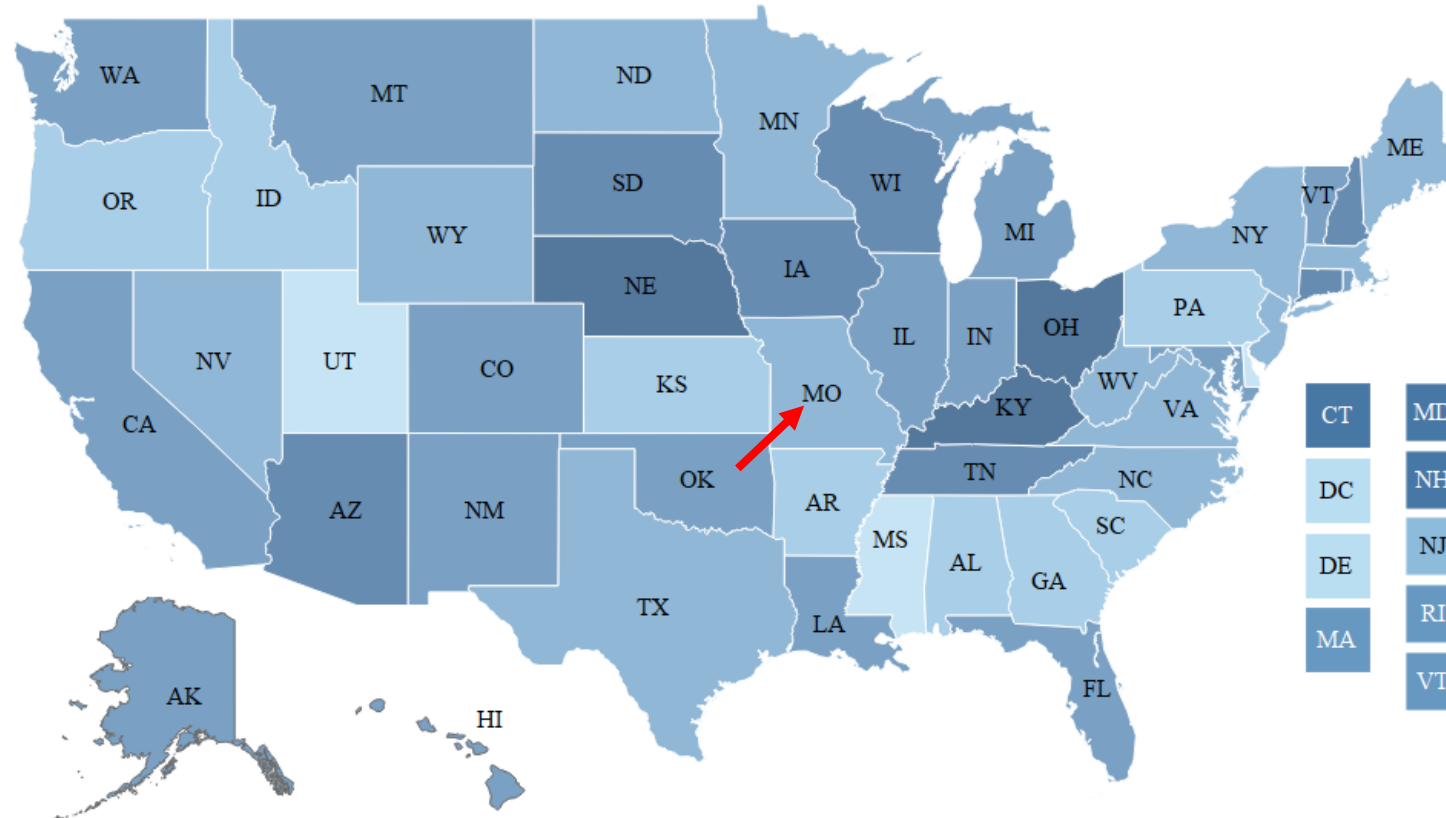
Effectiveness of sealants

- When placed correctly, can last up to 10 years!
- Reduces the risk of tooth decay by 80%
- CDC: school-aged children without sealants have almost 3 times more cavities than children with sealants
- Sealants can be placed over early dental decay to prevent the progression of the decay

National UDS Sealant Data

| | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 |
|-------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Percentage | 42.2% | 48.7% | 50.7% | 52.8% | 56.8 |
| Denominator | 285,799 | 275,690 | 266,511 | 269,241 | 252,774 |

Dental Sealants Measure: State Results



Ranges are adjusted to account for outliers.

*Territories excluded to make derive actionable insights on the continental US



The Non-Dental Professional's Role in Oral Health

- **Ask questions about oral health**
 - Can perform oral health risk assessments with patients (ADA, AAP, AAPD)
 - “Do you have a dental home?”
 - “Do you have any pain in your mouth?”
 - “How often do you brush?” “How do you take care of your teeth?”
 - “When was your last dental visit?”

The Non-Dental Professional's Role in Oral Health

- **If you're looking in the mouth, look at teeth for areas of concern**
 - Look for abnormalities:
 - Swollen gums
 - Plaque/food on teeth
 - Bleeding gums
 - Cavities
 - Trauma to gums



The Non-Dental Professional's Role in Oral Health

- **Give Parent and Patient Education on Oral Health**
 - Encourage regular brushing with fluoride toothpaste
 - Discuss healthy eating habits
 - Recommend dental visits
 - Encourage discussing dental sealants with their dental provider

Parent and Patient Education

- Important to convey the importance of oral health to parents and patients
- Relate oral health to general health concerns (growth/development, chronic diseases, etc.)

Polling

- How confident are you in providing oral health education to parents and children?
 - Very confident
 - Somewhat confident
 - Not at all confident
- Have you talked to parents and children about dental sealants before?
 - Yes
 - No

Dental Sealant Education

- Sealants are a cost-effective strategy to prevent cavities
- Easy and quick to apply – no anesthesia required, painless
- Sealant can prevent cavities which means...
 - Less likely to need a filling
 - Less money spent/lost
 - Less likely to experience dental pain
 - Less lost school days and work days

The Non-Dental Professional's Role in Oral Health

- **Interprofessional Collaborative Practice**
 - Collaborate with dental providers
 - Provide dental referrals
 - Assist in dental care coordination

Frequently Asked Questions



Is it safe for my
child to go to
the dentist
during COVID?

There are methods to apply dental sealants with minimal aerosol generation.

Children are still at risk (some at even higher risk) for dental decay during the pandemic.
Prevention is more important than ever!

No.

Dental sealants are a painless procedure that requires no anesthesia.

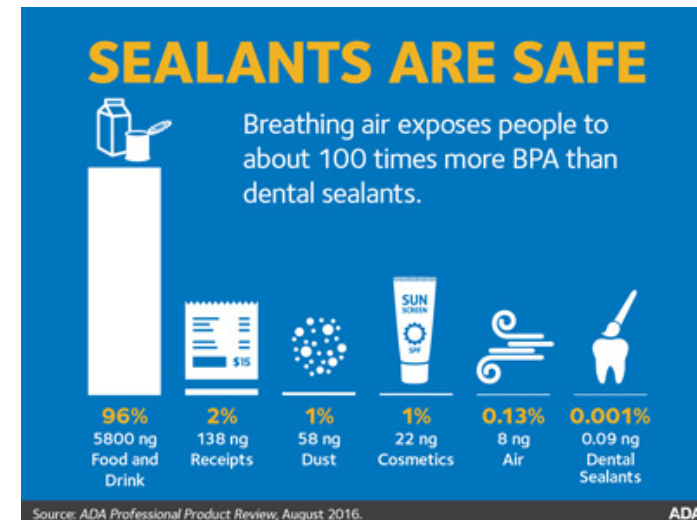
Do sealants hurt?





Yes, dental sealants are a safe and effective way to prevent dental sealants.

There is no health concern relative to BPA exposure from any dental material.





Since they are effective against cavities, do I still need to brush and use fluoride?

Yes.

Sealants are not a substitute to brushing.

It's recommended to use a fluoride toothpaste and receive fluoride varnish by a dental provider.

Sealants are a cost effective way to prevent cavities. They cost less than a filling!

Many dental insurances, including Medicaid, cover dental sealants for children.

How much do they cost?





**How are
sealants
applied?**

The tooth is usually prepared by removing food, applying acid etch to the surface of the tooth, rinsing, then applying the sealant material. The sealant is then light-cured.

After the sealant is placed, there is no need for a follow-up appointment. Just regular dental check-ups!

Do patients need to come back for a follow-up after the sealant is done?



Education Resources

- American Dental Association
 - <https://www.ada.org/en/member-center/oral-health-topics/dental-sealants#sealants>
 - <https://ebusiness.ada.org/productcatalog/77983/Child-Care/Seal-Out-Decay/W19120>
 - <https://ebusiness.ada.org/productcatalog/142/Child-Care/Dental-Sealants-Protecting-Teeth-Preventing-Decay/W291>
- Cavity Free at Three
 - <http://www.cavityfreeatthree.org/resources>
- Washington State DOH
 - https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/Pubs/160-145_SealantInfoParent.pdf

What are some things you've heard from parents/patients about dental sealants?

Contact Us!



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