

The Whittington Health NHS Dental team is coming to your child's school as part of the community fluoride varnish programme



The community fluoride varnish programme is designed to improve the dental health of children.

It involves a very brief inspection of your child's teeth followed by application of fluoride varnish as a means of preventing tooth decay.



What is fluoride varnish?

fluoride varnish is a protective coating that is easily painted on teeth. The varnish releases fluoride over a period of time, which strengthens teeth and prevents tooth decay. It can also stop tooth damage that has already started.

Why do you recommend putting fluoride varnish on children's teeth?

Tooth decay is still very common in children and it can cause pain, stop children from eating, speaking, sleeping and learning properly. Studies show that fluoride varnish is very effective if applied to the teeth at least twice a year.

What does it involve?

A small amount of fluoride varnish is painted onto the tooth surfaces using a small brush, where it dries instantly. It is quick, easy and tastes fruity.

Is fluoride varnish safe?

Yes, it is safe. There are no proven side effects when the correct amount of fluoride varnish is used. Use of fluoride varnish is part of the delivering better oral health recommendations by the Department of Health. Similar fluoride programmes are running in various areas in the UK.

(Delivering Better Oral Health- An evidence-based toolkit for prevention, Department of Health, third edition 2017)



Why do we need to look after baby teeth? Won't they be losing the baby teeth soon?

Remember baby teeth are there for a reason! They give the child something to smile and chew with and (importantly) they save space for the grown up teeth. Early loss of baby teeth can lead to problems with the adult teeth later on.

Is it free for my child?

Yes, this is a free programme and 3-7 year old children are eligible for two applications fluoride varnish per year. Please make sure you complete the consent form to make sure your child is seen by the dental team visiting your child's school.

Are there any reasons why my child should not have fluoride varnish applied at school?

If your child has: -

- Severe asthma
- Severe allergies / carries an Epi Pen
- A sore mouth or is unwell on the day

Instead, they may have fluoride applied at their usual dentist

Is it true that fluoride varnish contains alcohol? My religious beliefs do not allow consumption of alcohol.

Some fluoride varnishes contain alcohol, in the form of ethanol, but it has been agreed on the authority of the West Midlands Shari'ah Council that they are suitable for use by Muslims as they are being used as medicament, they are not an intoxicant and are used in small amounts well below that which would intoxicate and they are not being used for reasons of vanity.¹

1 Public Health England- Delivering better Oral health: an evidence-based toolkit for prevention. 12 June 2014. www.gov.uk/government/publications/delivering-better-oral-health-an-evidence-based-toolkit-for-prevention (accessed 21 July 2014)



Can my child have too much fluoride?

Too much fluoride sometimes causes white or brown spots on teeth so it is important that your child gets the right amount of fluoride. Your child should not take fluoride drops or tablets the day before, the day of, or the day after the application.

What happens on the day the dental team visit the school?

If you have returned the consent form to the school before our visit, we will inspect your child's teeth for any dental problems and apply fluoride varnish.

Aftercare instructions will be given to your child on the day.

We will also send you a letter if we think your child needs a more thorough examination at the dentist.

How do I make sure that my child gets free fluoride varnish treatment?

Please complete the consent form below and return it to your child's school as soon as possible.

Should I still take my child for regular dental check-ups even if they have been seen by the fluoride varnish team?

Yes! Being enrolled on this programme is not a replacement for regular check-ups at your family's dentist. During the fluoride varnish application, the inspection we carry out is very brief. It is not as thorough as a full examination that your child would receive at the dental surgery.

For more information please contact: -
Enfield Oral health promotion team
020 3316 8141 or 07977 461 205