

How do I get it?

Ask your dental practice about fluoride varnish for yourself and your family.

NHS dental care, including fluoride varnish is free for all children and some adults.

You can find information about local dentists by visiting:

The NHS website:
nhs.uk/find-a-dentist



What else can I do to look after my family's teeth?

For more advice about looking after teeth and gums, including information about who is eligible for free treatment, visit:

The Healthier Together webpage on oral health:
bit.ly/3BO2s8u



How fluoride varnish can help your teeth stay healthy and strong



What is fluoride varnish?

Fluoride varnish is one way to help protect your teeth from decay. It is a thin coating containing fluoride that is painted onto the teeth. Fluoride varnish has been shown to help strengthen the hard surface of the teeth, so you are less likely to get tooth decay.

Who needs it?

It is strongly recommended for all children from three years of age. It is also provided for younger children and adults who are at higher risk of getting tooth decay.

Those who are at higher risk of tooth decay include:

- People with certain medical, physical or additional needs
- People who already have tooth decay

Some people will also have it applied to reduce tooth sensitivity.

How is it applied?

A sticky gel is painted onto your teeth with a soft brush. The process is safe, quick and painless. It takes minutes to apply and dries quickly.

How often does it need applying?

Most people will have it applied twice a year, but people at higher risk of tooth decay can have it applied more often. Your dentist will decide the best plan for you.

What are the benefits?

Fluoride varnish can protect your teeth from tooth decay which could save you from needing dental treatment such as fillings or extractions.

Why is it important?

Tooth decay can cause pain, infection, sleepless nights, time off nursery or school and time off work for parents and carers. It's also one of the most common reasons for children to have to go to hospital for teeth to be removed.

Are there any instructions for before the treatment is carried out?

- You will be advised not to eat for a while after the fluoride varnish is applied. It is important that you don't have an empty stomach, so make sure you eat a meal and have healthy snacks/drinks before your appointment.
- Brush your teeth before you attend your dental appointment, so your teeth are nice and clean for the varnish to be applied
- Your dentist will ask some medical questions to check whether you or your child are able to have the fluoride varnish applied.

Are there any instructions for after the treatment is carried out?

- Follow the advice from the dental team
- Unless advised otherwise, avoid chewing food or toothbrushing for at least 4 hours after having the fluoride varnish applied to allow it to work. During this time soft foods and drinks can be consumed.
- Follow the advice from your dental team about any other products containing fluoride you might be using.
- In the rare event of an allergic reaction, brush teeth and rinse with water to remove the varnish, and seek emergency medical treatment.

