

Fluoride Varnish Application – a Quick Guide

1. You will need:

- ❖ Fluoride Varnish
- ❖ Gauze sponges (2 x 2)
- ❖ Small disposable brushes (e.g., Benda-Brush™)
- ❖ Dental mouth mirrors (disposable or sterilizable)
- ❖ Tongue blades
- ❖ Latex/vinyl gloves
- ❖ Flashlight (penlight size)

2. Position the child

- ❖ For an infant – place the child on the parent’s lap with the head on the parent’s knees and the legs at the parent’s waist. Position yourself knee-to-knee with the parent, and treat the child from above the head.
- ❖ Or, place an infant or young child on an exam table and work from above the head
- ❖ Or, adapt a method that works for you.

3. Apply the varnish

- ❖ Using gentle finger pressure, open the child’s mouth.
- ❖ Clean and dry the teeth with a gauze sponge. The teeth must be dry.
- ❖ Use your fingers and sponges to isolate the dry teeth and keep them dry. You will usually be able to isolate a quadrant of teeth at a time, and you will have fewer teeth to work with in younger children.
- ❖ Apply a **thin** layer of varnish to **all surfaces of the teeth**.
- ❖ Once it is applied, the varnish sets quickly – you need not worry about moisture (saliva) contamination.
- ❖ Repeat the varnish application every six months or at the appropriate interval depending on the child’s assessed level of risk for developing dental decay.

4. Instruct the parent/caregiver. Remind the parent:

- ❖ The child should eat a soft, non-abrasive diet for the rest of the day.
- ❖ The child’s teeth should not be brushed until the next day.
- ❖ The child’s teeth will not be shiny and may have an off-color (depending on the product) until the next day.
- ❖ Review the age-appropriate information sheet you provide for more information about varnish and good oral health habits

