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.

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