



Where can I find out about the treatment?



If you would like to know more about the treatment, ask your dentist or hygienist. They will tell you if fissure sealing will help your teeth and if it is the right time to do it.



British
Dental Health
Foundation

The British Dental Health Foundation is an independent, UK-based charity dedicated to promoting the benefits of good oral health to the public throughout the world.

The Foundation promotes three key messages:

- brush your teeth for two minutes twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste.
- cut down on how often you have sugary foods and drinks.
- visit your dentist regularly, as often as they recommend.

Look for our 'Approved' symbol on oral health products. You can trust these products to live up to the claims on their packaging.



The Dental Helpline is the Foundation's own confidential advice service. Qualified dental professionals are available to answer your questions personally from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday. Or you can send us a question by email from our website at any time.

 Dental
Helpline
0845 063 1188
www.dentalhealth.org

It costs the Foundation £9 for every enquiry we answer. If you would like to make a donation, please send a cheque to the address below, or phone 01788 539793 to donate by credit or debit card.

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by the word centre

British Dental Health Foundation,
Smile House, 2 East Union Street, Rugby CV22 6AJ, UK.



Tell me about

Pit and fissure sealants





Q What are sealants?

A Sealants are a safe and painless way of protecting your teeth from decay. A sealant is a protective plastic coating, which is applied to the biting surfaces of the back teeth. The sealant forms a hard shield that stops food and bacteria getting into the tiny grooves in the teeth and causing decay.

Q How do they work?

A The sealant forms a smooth, protective barrier by covering all the little grooves and dips (pits and fissures) in the surface of the tooth. Dental decay easily starts in these grooves.

Q Which teeth should be sealed?

A Sealants are only applied to the back teeth – the molars and premolars. These are the teeth that have pits and fissures on their biting surfaces. Your dentist will tell you which teeth should be sealed after examining them, and checking whether the fissures are deep enough for sealing to help. Some teeth naturally form with deep grooves which can be sealed, others form with shallow ones which may not need sealing.

Q When should this be done?

A Sealants are often applied as soon as the adult teeth start to come through. This is usually between 6 and 7 years of age. The rest are usually sealed as soon as they appear, which can be any time between 11 and 14.

Q What is involved?

A Sealing is usually quick and straightforward, taking only a few minutes for each tooth. The tooth is thoroughly cleaned, prepared with a special solution, and then dried. The liquid sealant is then put onto the tooth and allowed to set hard – usually by shining a bright light onto it.

Q Will I feel it?

A No. It is totally pain free, and the teeth do not feel any different afterwards.

Q How long does the sealant last?

A Sealants usually last for many years, but your dentist will want to check them regularly to make sure that the seal is still intact. They can wear over time, and sometimes the dentist needs to add or replace some sealant to make sure that no decay can start underneath.

Q Do I still have to clean my teeth?

A Yes. It is still vital that you do this. The smooth, sealed surface is now much easier to keep clean and healthy with normal tooth brushing. Using a fluoride toothpaste will also help to protect your teeth. Children up to three years old should use a toothpaste with a fluoride level of at least 1000ppm (parts per million). Three-year-olds to adults should use a toothpaste that contains 1350ppm to 1500ppm of fluoride. Pit and fissure sealing reduces tooth decay and the number of fillings you might need.



The tooth surface is cleaned, conditioned and dried.



Sealant is dropped onto the tooth surface and flows into position.



Sealant sticks to the tooth and is hardened under a blue light.



The tooth is sealed giving full protection.