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## FISSURE SEALANTS

Sealants can protect your children's back teeth, so that they may never need to have a filling!

Fissure sealants are a protective plastic coating, which your dentist applies to the chewing surfaces and sides of teeth at risk of decay.

The chewing surfaces of back teeth have small grooves or fissures which often extend right down into the tooth itself. Fissure sealants completely seal off these grooves, preventing any food particles or bacteria from getting in.

### **How is it done?**

First the fissure is checked for decay. Then the process simply involves cleaning the tooth surface, preparing it with a special solution, then applying the coating and setting it with a bright blue light.

### **Will it hurt?**

No injections or drilling are needed, and the entire process is pain free.

### **When should it be done?**

It's best to get the permanent back molar teeth sealed as soon as they start to come through. This is usually between 6 and 7 years of age.

### **The result**

The new smooth surface is now easy to keep clean and healthy with a toothbrush. Fissure sealants do not affect the normal chewing function of teeth.

### **Do the teeth need special care afterwards?**

No special care is needed, but the back teeth still need to be brushed regularly with a good toothbrush and fluoride toothpaste.

### **How long do fissure sealants last?**

Fissure sealants can last for many years, but your dentist will want to check them regularly to make sure the seal is still intact. They wear over time, and sometimes it is necessary to add or replace some sealant to be sure that no