

# Tips for a healthy smile

Fluoride varnish can help protect your child's teeth against tooth decay, but there are five important things that you can also do to ensure healthy teeth and gums.



**Remember to brush teeth every morning and night with a pea-sized amount of family fluoride toothpaste.**



**Spit out toothpaste, do not rinse after tooth brushing.**



**Limit sugary food and drinks including dried fruit to mealtimes.**



**Fizzy drinks, soft drinks, juice drinks and squash sweetened with sugar are harmful for teeth. So choose milk and water instead.**

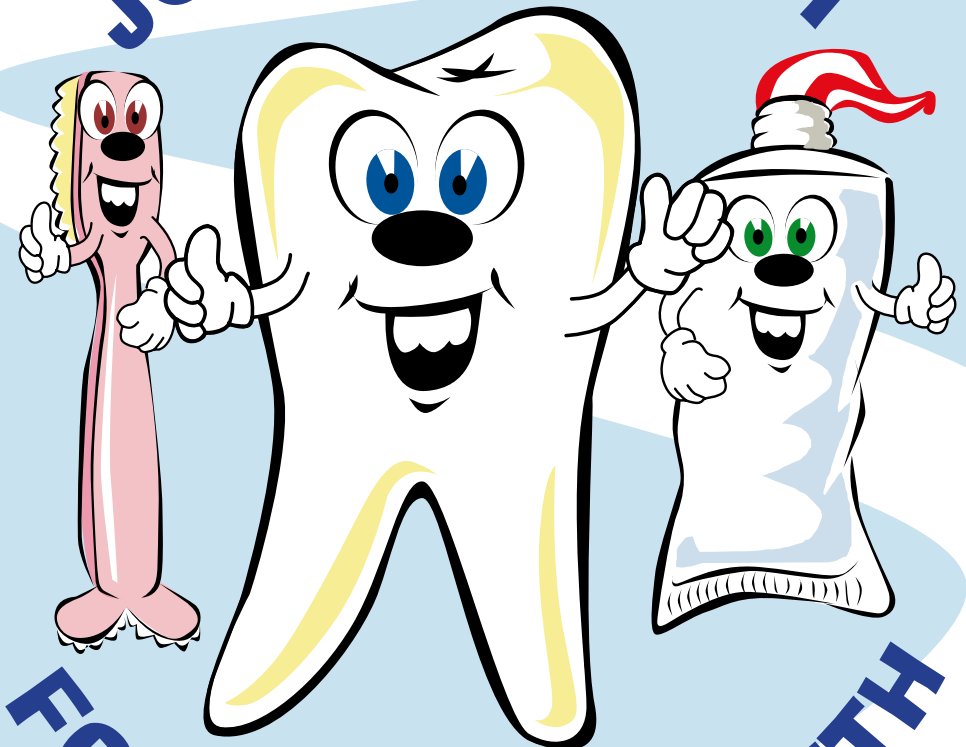


**Visit the dentist regularly.**



## Fluoride Varnish

JOIN THE FIGHT



FOR HEALTHY TEETH

For further information about the fluoride varnish programme, or if you have any questions please contact your school nurse.

# ...your questions answered about the School Fluoride Varnish programme

## What is fluoride varnish?

It is a gel which is painted on to children's teeth to protect them against tooth decay. It has a pleasant fruity taste.

## What good does fluoride varnish do?

Results from studies have shown that tooth decay can be reduced by applying fluoride varnish up to four times a year. This is important as the number of 5 year old children with tooth decay in some Teesside schools can be as high as 7 out of 10.

## Is fluoride varnish safe?

Yes. However, children who have been hospitalised for allergies or asthma will not be included in the programme. There is no evidence that fluoride varnish causes any other health problems.

## Why this school?

Schools that can benefit the most have been offered the opportunity to join this programme.

## Can all children take part?

No, only children who have returned a consent form signed by their parent or guardian can take part. Also children who have been hospitalised for allergies or asthma will not be included.

## What's involved?

After toothbrushing and checking children's teeth, the dental team will apply fluoride varnish. The application is quick and easy and should not take more than 5 minutes. It's a fun experience!

## Aftercare instructions: what to do next

As we would like fluoride varnish to remain on teeth as long as possible, it is recommended that:

- Your child does not eat or drink for 30 minutes after the application
- Your child eats soft foods for the rest of the day
- Do not brush your child's teeth until the next morning.

## Do parents need to be present?

No, school staff will work with the dental team to supervise the children. You will receive a card letting you know that your child has had the varnish applied.

## Can children have fluoride varnish at school and at the family dentist?

Yes, research shows that children will benefit from having up to four applications. For example, two at school and two at your own dentist.

## Should children still use fluoride toothpaste?

Yes, teeth should be brushed twice a day with a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste. Brushing teeth at night is really important to give additional protection against tooth decay.

## What does it cost?

It's free. Children will also get a free 'dental goody bag' including toothbrush, toothpaste and a sticker.