

# Fissure sealants

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## Information for patients

This leaflet explains what fissure sealants are and why your child needs them. If you have any queries or concerns, do not hesitate to contact one of the dentists caring for your child.

### **Confirming your identity**

Before you have a treatment or procedure, our staff will ask you your **name and date of birth** and check your **ID band**. If you don't have an ID band we will also ask you to confirm your address.

**If we don't ask these questions, then please ask us to check.**  
Ensuring your safety is our primary concern.

## **What are fissure sealants?**

Fissure sealants are protective plastic coatings, which are put on the biting surfaces of the back teeth. It forms a smooth protective barrier that stops food and bacteria getting into the tiny grooves in the teeth and causing decay. It is easy for decay to start in these grooves.

## **Why does my child need them?**

If there was decay in their baby teeth or if there is currently a high risk of decay. We put the sealant on as soon as the adult teeth start to come through. This is usually between the ages of six and seven. The rest can be sealed as soon as they appear, which can be any time between the ages of 11 and 14.

## **Which teeth should be sealed?**

Sealants are only put on the back molar teeth as these are the teeth that have pits and fissures on their biting surfaces. Some teeth develop naturally deep grooves which can be sealed, while others develop shallow grooves that may not need to be sealed. Your child's dentist will examine their teeth to check whether the fissures are deep enough for sealing to help, and then tell you and your child which teeth should be sealed.

## **What happens during the procedure?**

The dentist will clean your child's tooth and put on a mild acid solution to make it easier for the fissure sealant to stick. They will then dry it, put on a liquid sealant and shine a bright blue light onto it for it to set. Your child must keep their mouth open wide while we put on the sealants as we need to keep their teeth dry so that the sealant sticks to them.

## **How long does it take?**

It usually takes a few minutes to do each tooth.

## **Will I feel it?**

No, it does not hurt.

Your teeth can feel slightly different afterwards while your bite adjusts to them.

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

They usually last for many years but your child's dentist needs to check them regularly to make sure that the seal is still in place. They can wear over time, and sometimes the dentist needs to add some sealant or replace one, to make sure that decay cannot start growing underneath.

## **PALS**

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is a service that offers support, information and assistance to patients, relatives and visitors. They can also provide help and advice if you have a concern or complaint that staff have not been able to resolve for you. The PALS office is located on the ground floor of the Hambleton Wing, near the main entrance on Bessemer Road - staff will be happy to direct you.

Tel: 020 3299 3601 Email: [kch-tr.PALS@nhs.net](mailto:kch-tr.PALS@nhs.net)

You can also contact us by using our online form at [www.kch.nhs.uk/contact/pals](http://www.kch.nhs.uk/contact/pals)  
If you would like the information in this leaflet in a different language or format, please contact PALS on 020 3299 1844.

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