



# California CHDP/EPST Dental Training: Fluoride Varnish

Child Health and Disability Prevention (CHDP) Program  
Oral Health Subcommittee  
**March 2019**



# Training Objectives



- Identify children at risk for dental decay and who would benefit from fluoride varnish.
- Recognize the importance of providing fluoride varnish to high risk children (0 up to 6 years) in the medical office.
- Establish a protocol to implement fluoride varnish application in the medical office.
- Apply fluoride varnish and share information with other office staff.



# Fluoride Varnish



## The CHDP/EPSTD Medical Provider Role





# CHDP Providers Prevent Dental Decay



- Young children are seen earlier and more frequently by medical providers than by a dentist
- Low income young children are often at higher risk for dental decay
- Medical providers are now placing fluoride varnish to prevent decay
- Research shows high **efficacy** of fluoride varnish\*



\*Fluoride Varnish Efficacy in Preventing Early Childhood Caries



# Fluoride Varnish

## Nationwide Effort by Medical Providers



**States with Medicaid funding for physician oral health screening and fluoride varnish**



□ Medicaid coverage approved    ■ Reimbursement not yet approved

Source: American Academy of Pediatrics, <http://www2.aap.org/oralhealth/docs/OralHealthReimbursementChart.xlsx>

## 2011

**In 2017, Indiana was the final state to provide compensation through Medicaid to pediatric health professionals for fluoride varnish services.**



# Fluoride Varnish – Who Needs It?



## Caries Risk Factors:

- **Low Socioeconomic Status (SES)**
- **Active or Past Tooth Decay**
  - In parents, siblings, caregivers or child
  - White spot lesions on teeth
- **Poor Feeding Habits**
  - Frequent sipping and snacking on:
    - Carbohydrates – not just refined sugars
  - Bottle while sleeping/napping
  - Bottle after age 1



# Fluoride Varnish – Who Needs It?



## Caries Risk Factors (continued):

- **Lack of Fluoride Exposure\***
- **No Recent Dental Visit**
  - Within the last year
- **Poor Homecare**
  - Lack of daily brushing and flossing
- **Children with Special Health Care Needs**

\*California Water Board: List of Fully Fluoridated Water Systems (Fluoridation by Public Water)





# Fluoride Varnish – Which Teeth Benefit?



## No Visible Decay

but may have high risk factors



Preventable with fluoride varnish and good home care

## Advanced Decay

Destroyed enamel



Irreversible, however with fluoride varnish decay progression is inhibited

Dental treatment needed ASAP

Dental Referral Classification Guide

## Beginning Decay

white chalky decalcification near gum line



Reversible with fluoride varnish and improved home care to inhibit progression of caries

**DO NOT Apply to Teeth  
with**

**pulp exposure or tissue lesions**



Avoid these areas, but apply fluoride varnish to all other teeth in the mouth.

Immediate treatment needed for severe decay





# Fluoride Varnish - Facts



- A protective resin coating with sodium fluoride
- Brushed on teeth in 1-2 minutes
- 1 application can reduce decay risk up to 59%\*
- Applied up to 5x per year
  - 3x in medical office
  - 2x in dental office





# Frequency of Application



- Apply during a well child exam, follow-up visit, or stand-alone appointment.
- After the first fluoride varnish treatment, subsequent treatments can be applied every 3-4 months.





# Fluoride Varnish Safety



- Fluoride varnish is recommended even if other types of fluoride are being used, including:
  - Systemic fluoride (e.g. water fluoridation, tablets or drops)
  - Other topical fluorides (e.g. fluoridated toothpaste, mouth rinses, foam or gel trays)
- **Contraindications:**
  - Allergy to colophony (resin from conifers)  
- rare
  - Ulcerative gingivitis and/or stomatitis
  - Pulp exposure or deep decay





# Fluoride Varnish – Who Can Apply?



- Medical Office Setting
  - MD
  - Trained nurses and assistants
    - With MD/NP order \*

- Community Setting\*\*

(School, health fair or government program)

- Any trained person

- With signed parent/guardian permission
- Under a doctor's (or dentist's) prescription
- Following doctor's (or dentist's) protocol





# Fluoride Varnish – Supplies Needed



- Gauze
- Gloves
- Varnish Packet
- Tray or napkin(s)
- Hand sanitizer
- Optional
  - Mouth Mirror
  - Toothbrush
- Post Procedure -  
FV Brochure







# Fluoride Varnish – How to Apply?



1. Dry teeth with gauze



2. Apply to all surfaces



3. Apply to front teeth



4. Apply to bottom teeth





# Fluoride Varnish Procedure

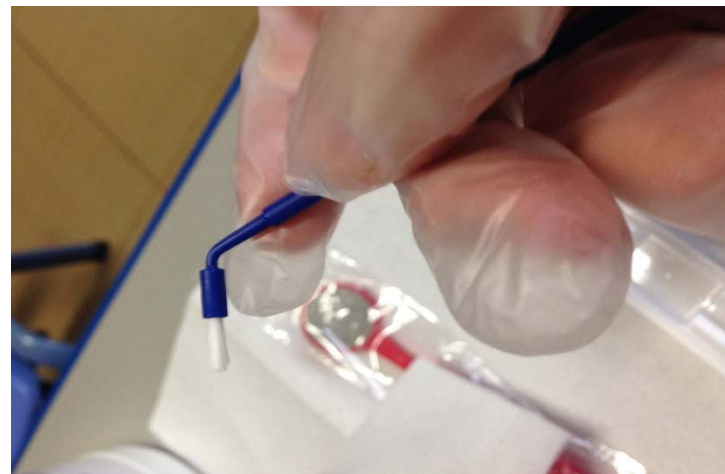


Prepare for treatment before positioning child

1. OPEN the packet of varnish
2. BEND the Brush
3. WRAP the gauze around finger

Next - position the child securing arms and legs

4. STIR varnish with applicator
5. DRY teeth lightly with gauze





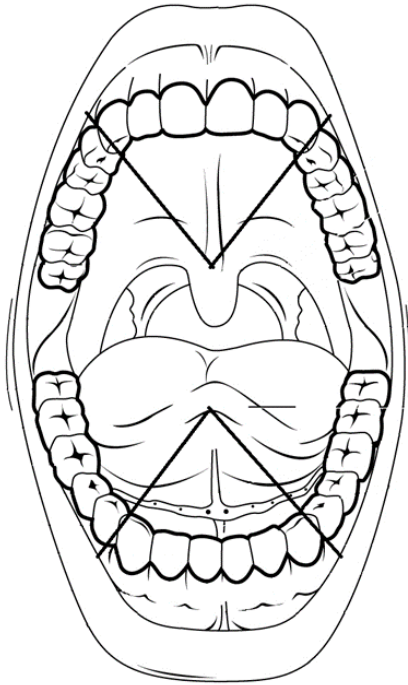


# Fluoride Varnish – Positioning





# Fluoride Varnish Procedure - continued



6. Work in sections
7. Retract cheeks with gauzed finger
8. Begin with upper right section of teeth
9. Repeat on left side
10. Continue this method on lower right and left sections





# Fluoride Varnish Procedure –

Key Point: Focus on Critical Teeth Surfaces



Apply to:

- Chewing surfaces of molars, into fissures and between teeth
- Upper front teeth – do not forget “tongue” side
- Where gums and teeth meet





# Fluoride Varnish – Parent Information



- No water restrictions after application
- Avoid crunchy, chewy, and hot foods/drinks for the rest of the day
- Do not brush/floss until the next day
- FV may leave a light color coating that will be brushed off the next day

## Brochure

### Fluoride Varnish



**Helping  
Smiles  
Stay Strong**



# Fluoride Varnish – Talking Points



- FV does not take the place of:
  - A dental visit
  - Brushing with fluoride toothpaste twice a day
  - Limiting sweets or sugary snacks
  - Drinking fluoridated tap water
- In addition to FV at medical offices, dentists can also provide FV or other topical fluoride treatments twice a year.



# Fluoride Varnish - Billing



Reimbursable 3 times (in a 12 month period)  
for children age 0 through 5

- **Fee-for-Service Medi-Cal**
  - Billing code: CPT 99188\*
  - Reimbursement - \$18 per application
- **Managed Care Medi-Cal**
  - Reimbursement varies
  - Contact individual plan
- **FQHC/RHC/IHS**
  - Not billable as a separate procedure –  
absorbed into encounter reimbursement

\*Medi-Cal Rates (Codes 94799 thru 99600) (DHCS)





# Fluoride Varnish – How to Order



## Three Ways:

### 1. Directly:

- Center for Oral Health 909-469-8300

### 2. Choose from list:

- AAP Ordering list

### 3. Internet search:

- Use search term “fluoride varnish buy”







# Fluoride Varnish – How to Implement in Your Practice



- Get leadership commitment
- Establish Health Records (EMR) for documentation
- Engage staff - information meetings
- Identify workflow
- Practicum training
- Train on documentation
- Publicize to parents
- Set start date



**For more details see  
“Steps to Implement  
Fluoride Varnish in Your  
Medical Practice” \***



# Fluoride Varnish – Establish a Protocol



- Identify:
  - ages to get FV
  - interval periods
- Establish standing order - Rx
- Assign duties to MA, or other trained staff
- Document in health record
- Give post procedure instructions
- Start small and go slow





# Easy and Effective



- Can be delegated to nursing and medical assistant staff, which empowers them to be the front line against oral disease.
- Can be applied at any time after the oral assessment.
- Can prevent a cavity with a swipe of a FV brush.

*With just a swipe of fluoride varnish, I can prevent tooth decay for this little girl!*



# Fluoride Varnish Online Trainings

## Videos



American  
Academy of  
Pediatrics  
Television

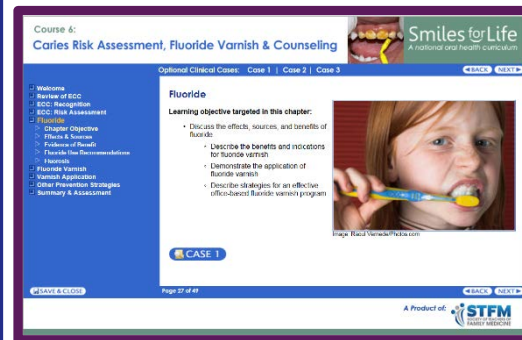


Smiles for  
Life  
University of  
Connecticut

## Modules



Maryland's  
Mouths Matter  
Module 4



Smiles for  
Life Training:  
Course #6



# Working Together



**Medical Providers**



**Dental Providers**

**Together we can  
stop the  
epidemic of  
oral disease!**



**Parents/Caregivers**



**Individuals**



# Questions?





# Thank you!

To view resources for this training, visit the References on slides 30-31

To access this training, visit CHDP Training and Resource Material

Visit the CHDP County Offices website for your local CHDP contact information





# Fluoride Varnish - Practicum -

- Speaker Demonstration
- Participant Practice



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# References



## Fluoride Varnish

- General Information
  - [ASTDD Fluoride Varnish: an Evidence-Based Approach Research Brief](#)
  - [AAP Oral Health Practice Tools](#)
  - [CDC Community Water Fluoridation - Fluoride Varnish](#) (scroll down)
  - [CDC Recommendations for Using Fluoride to Prevent and Control Dental Caries in the United States](#)
- National Effort
  - [PEW - Reimbursing Physicians for Fluoride Varnish](#)
- Effectiveness
  - [Fluoride Varnish Efficacy in Preventing Early Childhood Caries](#)
- Risk Assessment Tool
  - [AAP Oral Health Risk Assessment Tool](#)
  - [Pediatric Dental Care: Prevention and Management Protocols Based on Caries Risk Assessment](#)
- Who can Apply
  - [CHDP Provider Information Notice No.: 06-08](#)
  - [AB 667 – Topical Fluoride Legislation FAQ](#)



# References continued



## Fluoride Varnish

- Provider Guides
  - Dental Referral Classification Guide
  - CHDP Periodicity Schedule for Dental Referral by Age
- Parent Brochure
  - Fluoride Varnish Helping Smiles Stay Strong
- Training Modules
  - STFM Smiles for Life Fluoride Varnish Video
  - AAPTIV Oral Exam - Positioning & Application of Fluoride Varnish Video
  - A Health Professional's Guide to Pediatric Oral Health Management - Module 4.2 Fluoride Varnish
  - STFM Smiles for life Course 6: Caries Risk Assessment, Fluoride Varnish and Counseling
- Billing Code
  - Medi-Cal Provider Manual Part 2 – Clinics and Hospitals (CAH) Dental Benefits