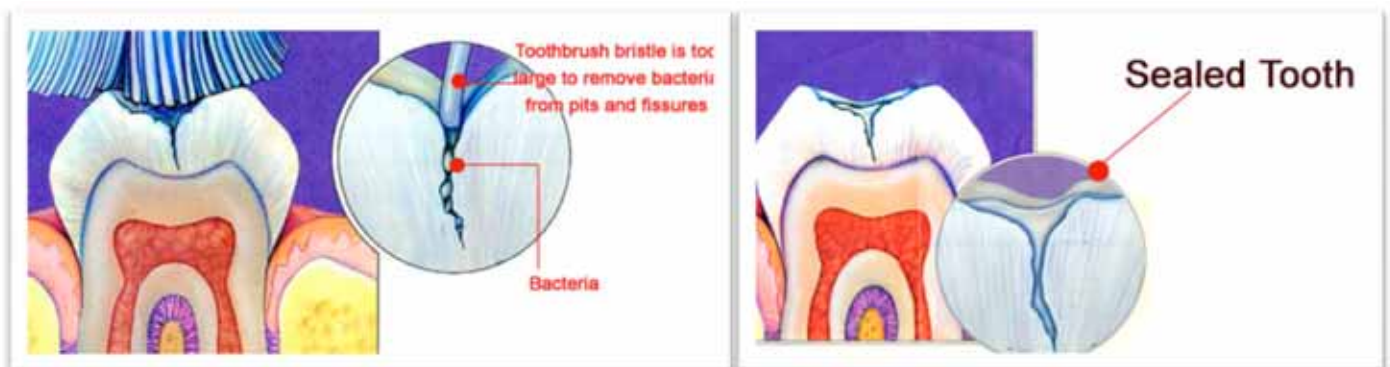


Pit & Fissure Sealants

Almost 9 out of 10 cavities in children occur on the biting surfaces of the tooth. There are two reasons for this:

- * Fluoride is not very effective in these fissure areas as it is on smooth surfaces, such as between the teeth.
- * The grooves in some teeth are often so deep as to prevent the bristles of a brush from cleaning the area of food and bacteria.

Food and plaque gain access into the groove where a toothbrush bristle simply won't reach and a cavity develops easily. The pit and fissure sealant is a bonded plastic that essentially "plugs up" the groove and therefore, prevents a cavity. The procedure is simple and No anaesthetic is required. Because permanent molars typically have the deepest grooves and the highest decay rates, these teeth are often treated with sealants. However, other teeth may benefit by sealant also.



As you or your children eat and drink during the day, the food in your mouth combines with bacteria to produce a sticky film called plaque that attaches on and in between tooth surface (tooth enamel). Plaque often is found on the chewing surfaces of the back teeth, from which it is difficult to remove by brushing and flossing alone. If plaque is not removed regularly from your teeth, it can produce acids which will attack the tooth enamel and create pits or holes (cavities) in the tooth. This is tooth decay. Coating your teeth with this smooth plastic material makes it harder for plaque to stick to the tiny grooves on the biting surfaces of the teeth.

The procedure is easy and painless. The teeth are specially cleaned and prepared, the sealant is applied and a special light hardens the sealant. Sealants are most effective in reducing cavities in children with newly formed permanent teeth. They are useful in cutting down formation of decay in adult teeth but since we chew harder, the sealants wear away more quickly. An application of sealants is a preventive measure to keep teeth healthy. It is an effective way to reduce the need for fillings and more expensive treatment that may be required to repair the damage from cavities, so sealants can also save you money.