California
CHDP/EPSDT
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/EPSDT 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
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

**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

**Advanced Decay**
Destroyed enamel

Irreversible, however with fluoride varnish decay progression is inhibited

Dental treatment needed ASAP

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

*Recommendations for Using Fluoride to Prevent and Control Dental Caries in United States (CDC)
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

*CHDP Provider Information Notice No.:06-08 & **Policy Pick: Topical Fluoride Varnish and AB667
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

Print copies of Fluoride Varnish – Helping Smiles Stay Strong brochure
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” *

*CHDP Dental Training: Fluoride Varnish Materials
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

Together we can stop the epidemic of oral disease!

Medical Providers

Dental Providers

Parents/Caregivers

Individuals

Local CHDP Program Contact Information
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

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Fluoride Varnish - Practicum -

- Speaker Demonstration
- Participant Practice

California Child Health & Disability Prevention (CHDP) Program
Oral Health Subcommittee
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

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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
  • AAPTV 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

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