Sealants First!
Prioritizing Prevention through Same Day Sealants

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September 2015
7 operatories

Hub of Hope

September 2018
1 operatory
Who is a dental hygienist (RDH)?

“Oral health professionals who are responsible for preventing and treating oral diseases.”
Dental Caries – the FACTS

• The most common chronic diseases children 6-11YO and adolescents 12-19YO
• Five times more common than asthma for ages 14-17
• A primary health related cause for school absenteeism
• 12 times more likely to be restricted in daily activities
A Tale as Old as Time

Old School Treatment = restore!
### ICDAS (International Caries Detection and Assessment System)

**Non-Cavitated Lesions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>Early Stage Decay</th>
<th>Established Decay</th>
<th>Severe Decay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sound</td>
<td>First visual change in enamel</td>
<td>Distinct visual change in enamel</td>
<td>Localised enamel breakdown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Non-Surgical Treatment!**
So What?

- ADA & AAPD Systematic Review of RCTs.
- JADA August 2016
- ADA & AAPD Guidelines for Sealants August 2016 ADA Evidence-Based Recommendations March 2008
  - JADA (1976) 93(11):967-970
  - JADA (1978) 97(9):455-461
# Prevent – Remineralize – Arrest (Primary & Secondary Prevention)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prevention &amp; Remineralization</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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</table>
| **Fluoride**                  | Highly effective in all forms.  
• Water  
• Professionally Applied: Varnish, Foam  
• Home Delivery: Prevident, OTC Fluoride Toothpaste, ACT Rinse |
| **Sealants**                  | Highly effective if applied correctly.  
• Resin-Based  
• Glass Ionomer |
| **Salivary Stimulation**     | • Chewing Gum: Xylitol or Sugar Free |
| **Diet Modification**        | • Behavioral Changes: Frequency, Type  
• Protective Food Additives: Calcium, Phosphate, Sugar Substitutes |
| **Antimicrobials**           | • Non-Specific: Chlorhexidine, Listerine  
• Targeted: Antibiotics |
| **Non-Fluoride Remineralizing Agents** | • Casein Phosphopeptide (CPP) – Amorphous Calcium Phosphate (ACP): MI Paste, Recaldent |

5 Reasons Why You Should Prioritize Sealants
Reason 1: #1 Disease

• Tooth decay is the *single most common* chronic childhood disease
  • 5x more common than asthma
  • 4x more common than early-childhood obesity
  • 20x more common than diabetes

• Chronic periodontitis is more common in adults than children
Reason #2: The Importance of Teeth

- Children need cavity-free teeth to:
  - Eat
  - Talk
  - Smile
  - Feel good about themselves

- Cavities can lead to:
  - Not eating well
  - Pain
  - Poor sleep
  - Poor self esteem
Reason #3: Poor School Performance

- Dental problems account for ~2 million lost school days each year
- Tooth Pain → missing school
- Tooth Pain → inability to concentrate
- Prevention is key

20% of children ages 5 to 11 have at least 1 untreated decayed tooth

Reason #4: Everyone Wants a Cleaning

• “I just want my teeth cleaned”
• If there isn’t enough time in visit for prophy, patients may still be inclined to come back for the cleaning.
Reason #5: Kids Might Not Come Back

Common thoughts:
• “I’ll just group it with the restorative visit. All the materials will be out then anyway, and the quadrant will be isolated.”
• “They are only here for an emergency – we’ll take care of the sealants at the comp exam / prophy visit.”

The problems:
• Consistent appointments to finish treatment plan?
  • No Shows
  • Multiple restorative visits can take a while to complete
• What if they don’t come back?
• The urgent patients might be the ones that need our preventive help the most.
The patient that only comes in when they have a toothache

Kayla age 5

Kayla age 8
What about the RDH??
Traditional Hygiene Appointment

Complete prophy

Exam by dentist

Apply sealants (?)
Sealants First = Same Day Sealants

- Assess for sealants
- Apply sealants
- Perform prophylaxis as indicated
WHEN I DROP THE SUCTION

AND I’M ALREADY RUNNING BEHIND
Strategies for Same Day Sealants

• Ready to go sealant kits
• Glass ionomer or wetbond sealant material
• Use an assistant
• Isolation systems
• Fast curing light
• Identify patients eligible for sealants before the appointment (daily huddles)
• Establish a workflow for Sealants First
• Regular pt education on sealants
• Provider buy-in
Toothbrush Prep

Sealant retention is comparable whether the tooth is prepared by dry toothbrushing or a handpiece prophylaxis with pumice

- No evidence that prophy improves caries prevention effectiveness of FL or sealants
- Save time!
Effective Practices to Implement

Change Ideas to More Reliably Apply Sealants Every Time
And still have time for the prophy too!

NONE OF US ARE HOME UNTIL ALL OF US ARE HOME®
#1: Sealant Trays

- Keep in each operatory
- Always ready, no matter what type of appointment
- Sealants can be applied at emergency visits too
- Sealant, etch, bond, applicator tips, pumice, prophy brush, microbrush, articulating paper, dry angles or other isolation tools...
#2: Isolation System

• Ex: DryShield, Isolite
• Faster placement
• More effective
• Practice makes perfect!
#3: Streamline Workflows

- Differs by state practice act, determine what is most efficient in your state
- If dentist exam required - need to get the attention of dentist early in visit
  - “sealant exam” code used if hygienist thinks that teeth are eligible for sealant placement
  - Dentist prioritizes this patient
- If no exam required before placement – have dentist gain confidence in your diagnostic abilities by confirming sealant eligibility before sealant placement for a few patients
#4: Identify Patients on Schedule

- Identify patients in sealant-eligible age range
- Daily huddles
- Identify on schedule with “SEAL” or “*” visual cues
- All staff will be aware that these patients need to be prioritized
#5: Consider Different Materials

- Difficult patient?
- No time?
- Difficult isolation?
- Partially erupted?
- Glass Ionomer Fuji Triage
  - easy to place
- Pulpdent embrace wetbond
  - moisture tolerant
• Dentists, hygienists, assistants (and the front desk too, in case you happen to run behind!)
  • If allowed in your state, consider partnering with EFDAs for same-day sealants!
• Gain buy-in buy sharing the evidence
• Share quality graphs & metrics with the entire team
• Make it a friendly competition between sites or providers
Testing, Testing!
Test: Apply same-day sealants on 5 patients using DryShield. We predict we will save time with DryShield and also have enough time to do a prophy on each patient.

Sealants were applied on 5 patients on 3 separate clinic days. Patients were receptive to the novelty of DryShield and stated it was comfortable. Prophys were completed after sealants for all 5 patients.

We will implement the use of DryShield into our practice for all same-day sealant placements.

First application from setup of DryShield to completed sealant placement was 8 minutes. Time decreased to 5 minutes by 5th patient. Still plenty of time for prophy.

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**Act**
- What changes are to be made?
- What will be the next cycle?

**Plan**
- State objectives of the cycle
- Make predictions
- Develop plan to carry out cycle (who, what, where, when)

**Study**
- Complete the analysis of the data
- Compare data to predictions
- Summarize what was learned

**Do**
- Carry out the test.
- Document problems and unexpected observations
- Begin analysis of the data

Source: *The Improvement Guide, 1996*
Run Charts

4. Sealants (6-9 Year Olds)

5. Sealants (10-14 Year Olds)

Goal = 80

Per cent

January 2017 to October 2019

Pre-collaborative  Post-collaborative

None of us are home until all of us are home®
The Value of Hygienists

• Meaningful role in educating patients
• Hygienist often sees caries late in disease process for adult patients, when it’s often too late and teeth require surgical treatment
• Prioritizing sealants reinforces for patients that prevention is important
• Opens discussion on caries as disease process
• In our practice, all new patients ages 6-18 are scheduled with hygienist for 1st visit
• Empowered hygienist to embrace this evidence-based practice
• Opportunity to make an impact on the community
Sealants First!

• Evidence supports sealants for preventing and arresting decay!

• Prioritize sealants during hygiene visits through sealants first mindset – sealant placed first, prophy after

• Educate patients on importance of dental sealants
QUESTIONS?
Contact Us!

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