

Application of fluoride varnish tip sheet

Reasons to apply fluoride varnish

- History of dental caries (tooth decay) is an important predictor of risk for future disease
- Children with early childhood decay are more likely to experience further decay in their lifetime. Baby teeth remain in a child's mouth until age 11 or 12
- Tooth decay can go beyond pain and can also affect your child's:
 - Speech
 - Ability to eat
 - Ability to learn
 - Feelings about themselves
- Fluoride varnish helps prevent dental caries and, in some cases, reverse early dental caries. Fluoride can reduce decay by 30-63% if coupled with dental health counseling
- Due to the high efficacy of fluoride varnish, it is now being applied in non-dental settings
- Application of fluoride varnish is quick, easy, painless and can be delegated to nursing and medical assistant staff

Coding requirements

- Application of topical fluoride varnish by a physician or other health care professional
CPT code: 99188
- Topical application of fluoride varnish CDT code: D1206

Best practices

- United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommends that physicians apply fluoride varnish to the primary teeth of all infants and children starting at the age of primary tooth eruption
- American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends application of fluoride varnish at least once every 6 months, and preferably every 3 months, starting at tooth eruption