

# Fluoride Varnish Program

## INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Public Health, in partnership with schools, will be offering up to two FREE fluoride varnish applications during the school year to help protect student's teeth from getting cavities. We are offering fluoride varnish to all elementary aged students in your school.



### What is fluoride?

Fluoride is a naturally occurring mineral found in soil, plant- and animal-based foods, and water. Because fluoride helps to prevent cavities, it is also added to various dental products. Fluoride strengthens tooth enamel (the outer layer of teeth), making them more resistant to cavities/tooth decay.

### What is Fluoride varnish?

Fluoride varnish is a protective coating that can be safely applied to teeth up to 6 times per year to prevent, stop or reverse cavities. It can also be applied on teeth that already have cavities. Applying fluoride varnish to teeth is quick and easy.

### What is the Fluoride Varnish Program?

The Fluoride Varnish Program is a Public Health program that offers up to two extra applications of fluoride to teeth for students in selected elementary schools. A Registered Dental Hygienist from Public Health will come to your school to apply fluoride varnish to students' teeth. The program is trying to help reduce cavities in school-aged children.

A small amount of varnish will be applied to visible surfaces of student's teeth using a small disposable brush. It is applied quickly and only takes a few seconds to harden.

A note will be sent home after each application.

**This program is not meant to replace regular check-ups or fluoride treatments by a dentist, dental hygienist or other community oral health care program. The varnish application is not a complete oral health exam.** A visual observation will be done for the purpose of applying the fluoride varnish.

### How do I care for their teeth after fluoride varnish is applied?

Students can eat and drink right after the fluoride varnish is applied.

The fluoride varnish may appear and feel like a film on the teeth that will wear off in a few hours after application. They may brush and floss at bedtime. Students should not receive any other professional fluoride treatment or rinse with a home fluoride mouthrinse for 24 hours.

### Is fluoride varnish safe?

Yes. Fluoride varnish is safe and used by dentists, doctors, and dental hygienists all over the world to help prevent tooth decay in children from the time the first teeth come in. The use of fluoride varnish is approved and recommended by Health Canada, the Canadian Dental Association, and the Canadian Dental Hygienists Association.

### Is there a cost to participate in the fluoride varnish program?

No. There is no cost to students and families.

#### You should know:



Fluoride Varnish products contain a natural tree sap resin, also known as colophony and rosin, which some people can be allergic to. The tree sap resin is used to help the fluoride varnish stick to the tooth surface. This tree sap resin is also used in many everyday products such as in chewing gum and in the glue used for bandages. An allergy to tree sap resin is very uncommon, however, students with an allergy to colophony/rosin should not get fluoride varnish.

Students diagnosed with asthma by a doctor and who use quick reliever medication, must have their current quick reliever medication with them when receiving fluoride varnish. Though uncommon, the tree sap resin may be an irritant to those with asthma. Students should be prepared to use their medication in case it is needed.

Your consent is valid for this current school year unless cancelled in writing.

#### Questions?

If you have questions about the Fluoride Varnish Program, please contact your local Public Health office.



1

**READ** the information provided above.

2

**COMPLETE, SIGN,** and **DATE** the attached consent form.

3

**RETURN** the fluoride varnish consent form to the school even if the student is not participating in this program.



## HOW TO CONTACT YOUR LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICE

If you have any questions about the information in this booklet, or if there is anything you don't understand, contact your local Public Health office. You can also visit the Public Health website: [www.nshealth.ca/public-health](http://www.nshealth.ca/public-health)

**Amherst**

902-667-3319 or  
1-800-767-3319

**Antigonish**

902-867-4500  
ext. 4800

**Baddeck**

902-295-2178

**Berwick**

902-538-3700

**Bridgewater**

902-543-0850

**Canso**

902-366-2925

**Chester**

902-275-3581

**Cheticamp**

902-224-2410

**Digby**

902-245-2557

**Elmsdale**

902-883-3500

**Glace Bay**

902-842-4050

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**Halifax Regional  
Municipality &  
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902-481-5800

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**Meteghan Centre**

902-645-2325

**Middleton**

902-825-3385

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**New Glasgow**

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**New Waterford**

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