

In our ongoing commitment for disease prevention Personal Care Pediatrics is now offering **fluoride treatments** to all our patients from the time the 1st tooth erupts through age 42 months

**Why apply Fluoride to baby teeth?** In the past year the amount of tooth decay in children aged 2 years to 5 years has increased. Applying fluoride to teeth can help prevent tooth decay and reverse this trend.

Baby teeth, also called primary teeth, are very important for speech development, nutrition, intestinal tract function, appearance, and as place holders for the adult teeth, or secondary teeth. When a tooth decays, causing a cavity, this decay is painful, disrupts the function of the tooth, and if left untreated may result in other bodily infections. In addition, the application of fluoride in helping prevent cavities reduces costly dental repair, work absence for caregivers, and the stress that dental procedures may have on your family.

**How: is this done?**

This procedure can be done at any type of visit provided your child is free from communicable infectious disease. The teeth are first dried with a piece of gauze and then a fluoride paint known as varnish is painted onto all surfaces of the teeth. The varnish dries to the touch almost instantly but needs to be protected from scratches for 24 hours. This is done by avoiding all hard, crunching food like cookies, crackers etc. and instead feeding your child softer foods during this 24 hour time period. Likewise, do not brush your child's teeth for 24 hours after the fluoride application.. The fluoride varnish is completely safe for ingestion and has a pleasant flavor and in general children tolerate the application procedure well.

**Cost:**

These treatments are covered under Medicaid and Medicaid HMOs. For our private insured patients and those with no insurance the service is available at the cost of 20\$ per application. The application is recommended every 90 days, but any application is beneficial to your child's dental health

**In addition here are some other suggestions you can do at home to promote dental health in your family**

- All caregivers should have regular dental visits, and practice good oral hygiene. This will decrease cavity causing bacteria in the caregiver's mouth that can be spread to the child. In addition personal dental care teaches the child by example healthy habits.
- Breastfeed your baby.
- Do not let your baby sleep with a bottle, unless it is filled with only water.
- Bottles should only contain formula or water, never juice.
- Bottles should be discontinued at 12 months of age.
- Do not dip pacifiers in sweet substances
- Do not let your child have free access to a Sippy cup filled with juice or milk. This constant sipping behavior increases tooth decay.
- Clean your baby's teeth as soon as they come in with a clean soft cloth, especially before bedtime.
- At about 15 months brush your child's teeth with a pea sized dot of fluoride toothpaste twice daily. Until a child is 7 or 8 years they will need help in brushing their teeth.
- Schedule regular dental appointments, every 6 months after age 4 years.

**Fluoride Supplementation in our water**

- Make sure the water you are giving you child has fluoride in it – all Broward and Dade county water has fluoride in it. In Palm Beach, Delray, Boynton and Boca west of the Turnpike have fluoridated water. Filtering water and using bottle water may remove Fluoride from the water so you will need to address with the filter company or water provider. Nestle Waters is a bottled water that does contain Fluoride. However, in regard to bottle water verses tap - bottled water can come from any number of sources and has less stringent regulations than city tap water.
- If your water does not have fluoride in it asks us for a prescriptions for fluoride vitamins. These need to be given from age 6 months to 16 years of age