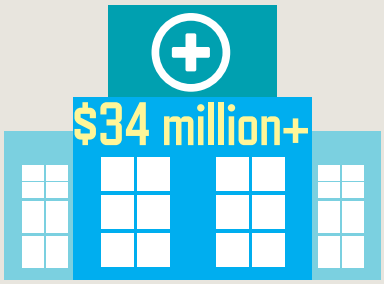
Dental sealants

keep children healthy & ready to learn.

Sealants decrease dental caries & can yield up to an 88% return on investment.

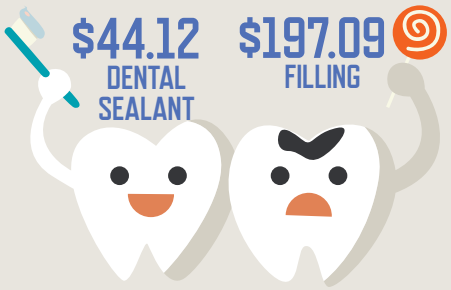
Every $1 spent on dental sealants, saves $1.88 in fillings.

About 23.4% of Florida third graders have untreated tooth decay.



There were 27,413 caries-related emergency department visits costing more than $34 million in 2015.

PREVENTION vs. TREATMENT



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Tooth Decay: The Problem

Tooth decay is the single most common chronic childhood disease.[1] Florida data reveal that approximately 1 in 4 (23.4%) third grade children aged 5 to 11 years have untreated tooth decay (caries).[2] Untreated tooth decay is higher for racial and ethnic minorities and children from low-income families. These children are less likely to receive preventive dental care.

Untreated tooth decay is painful and keeps children from school. Children with poor oral health are three times more likely to miss school due to oral health problems.[3] Pain and infection from caries, toothaches, and abscesses can also affect children's ability to focus in school.[4]

Caries-related Emergency Department (ED) visits in Florida totaled 27,413 for children ages 0–20 during 2015. The charges associated with these 27,413 visits totaled $34,764,372.[5]

Dental Sealants: The Solution

Dental sealants effectively reduce tooth decay in children. Dental sealants are thin plastic coatings applied to the grooves on the chewing surfaces of the back teeth.[6] This protection against tooth decay reduces caries incidence over time: 86.0% (year one), 78.6% (year two), and 71.2% (year three).[7]

Prevention vs. Treatment: The Cost

The Florida Department of Health's Public Health Dental Program supports statewide preventive dental services through County Health Department dental programs. Dental sealants performed by these locations during 2015 were analyzed for cost effectiveness by comparing the national cost estimates of receiving one dental sealant ($44.12) to one dental filling ($197.09) on an unsealed tooth.[8] The cost savings over three years for 39,083 children receiving one dental sealants is more than $2.5 million.

Learn more: FloridaHealth.gov/Dental

Florida HEALTH

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