

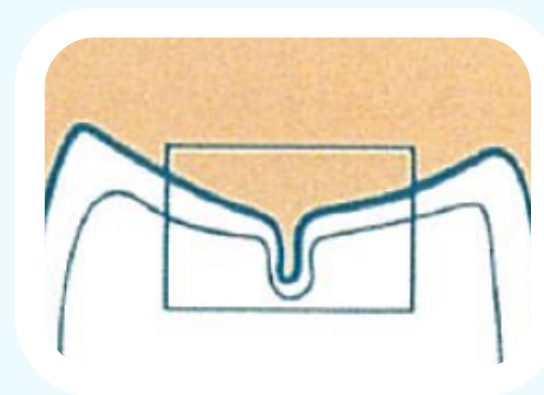
# Fissure Sealants

Sealants are a protective coating applied to the back teeth to help prevent decay

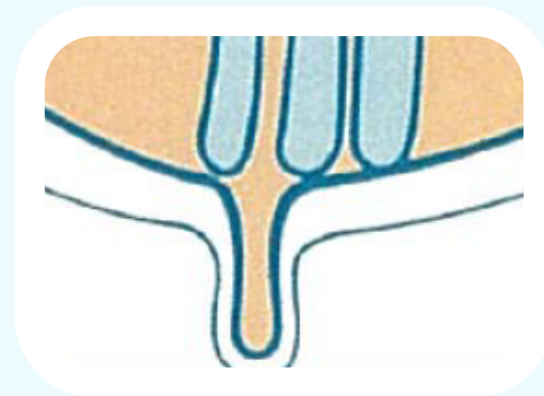
## Why apply a fissure sealant?

Fissures are deep grooves on the chewing surfaces of the back teeth. These grooves are difficult to clean, as toothbrush bristles can't always reach them to remove all plaque. As a result, fissures can decay. Fissure sealants are often recommended if early decay or deep grooves are noted.

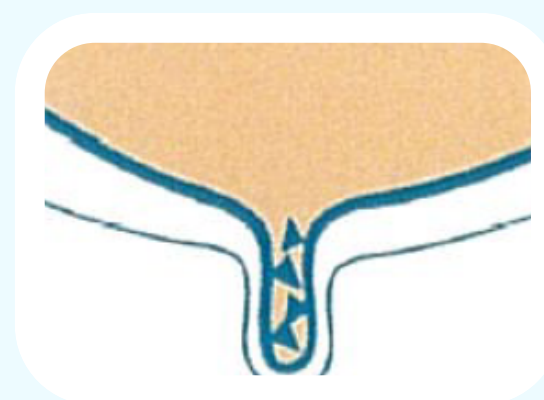
To help prevent decay starting or progressing, the fissures of back teeth can be sealed with a fissure sealant. This is a very thin coating that fills in the grooves so the tooth is easier to keep clean and healthy with regular brushing. Fissure sealants do not affect the normal chewing function of teeth.



**Deep fissures (grooves)**



**Toothbrush cannot clean in the fissure**



**Plaque retained which can cause tooth decay**

## How are fissure sealants applied?

A fissure sealant is painless and requires no drilling. After the tooth is cleaned, the sealant is painted on and set with a UV light. Depending on the tooth, the therapist will either use a resin-based material or a glass-ionomer cement sealant. Both are BPA-free.

These teeth still need to be brushed twice a day. Fissure sealants sometimes need to be repaired or replaced. Sealants will be checked at every dental appointment.



**Natural fissures in a tooth**



**Complete fissure sealants**

## After you get a fissure sealant

- After fissure sealants have been placed you can eat and drink straight away.
- The sealed teeth might feel a bit different at first, but after a day they'll feel normal again.

**For information about free dental care for under 18s:**

**Visit: [www.HealthNZ.govt.nz/BeeHealthy](http://www.HealthNZ.govt.nz/BeeHealthy) Call: 0800 TALK TEETH (825 583)**