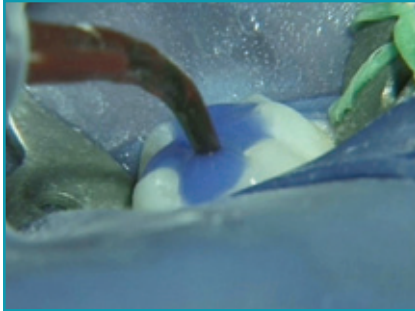


# Sealants



*Applying conditioning agent*



*Placing white sealant*



*Sealant hardens quickly*

## **What are sealants?**

Sealants are a clear or white plastic that are placed in the grooves of the biting surfaces of back teeth to protect them from the destructive effects of plaque.

## **Why are sealants needed?**

Back teeth have deep grooves and pits that are very difficult to keep clean. Plaque, which is a nearly invisible film of bacteria and food, collects in these grooves. To make the plaque easier to see, we may stain the plaque with a harmless red dye.

Every time you eat, the bacteria in plaque forms acid. Without sealants, these acid attacks can cause the enamel to break down, and you get a cavity.

## **How are sealants placed?**

To place sealants, you usually don't even have to be numb. First we thoroughly clean and dry the teeth, and a conditioning solution is applied. Then the sealant material is brushed into the grooves. Some types of sealants harden on their own, while others harden when exposed to a special light.

Sealants are an important part of a preventive dental care program.