Waushara County Health News

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Oral health and fluoride
Care of teeth begins early in life. Early childhood cavities are a very serious disease and they are preventable with your help.
Waushara County Health Department is offering two fluoride supplement programs and a dental sealant program.
Fluoride Varnish
Fluoride varnish is a new cavity prevention program being offered to all children ages six months to six years.
What is fluoride varnish? Fluoride varnish is a protective coating that is brushed on teeth to help prevent new cavities and to help stop cavities that have already started. Fluoride varnish also hardens the outer layer of the teeth.
The use of fluoride varnish has been a major factor in the decline of tooth decay in the United States. Fluoride varnishes are a safe, simple, effective, and inexpensive treatment that is

approved by the Food and Drug Association and the American Dental Association. All three

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school districts are providing this program.

Fluoride supplements

The majority of residents in Waushara County, who have their own well, have very little naturally occurring fluoride in their water, and only the cities of Wautoma and Coloma have fluoridated public water.

Dietary fluoride supplements are intended for use with children between the ages of six months and 16 years and are available by prescription. We have a prescription signed by our medical provider.

Fluoride supplements are intended to make up for a lack of fluoride in drinking water. Therefore, the water for the residence must be tested for fluoride prior to receiving supplements.

Test kits are available from the Health Department and the cost of processing at the State Lab of Hygiene is dependent upon the family income. When families have completed the requirements to be in the program, they are able to receive a four month supply of fluoride and request refills as needed.

For children six months to three years, a liquid dietary supplement is offered. For children three years to 16 years, there is a chewable supplement available.

For the elementary schools in the county without fluoridated water, there is a dental swish program that is offered once a week during the school year. The swish is a mouth rinse that the child swishes in their mouth for one minute and then spits out. In Waushara County, 547 children ages five through 12 have been using the dental swish program.

Fluoride use has been a major factor in the decline of dental cavities in the United States and around the world. It has been used throughout the world, in the form of tablets, lozenges and

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liquids, since the 1940's.

There have always been a lot of false claims made against fluoridation. Some of these wild claims say that fluoride causes: AIDS, low intelligence, Alzheimer's disease, Down Syndrome, osteoporosis, and bone fractures, to name a few. However, the safety of fluoridation has been frequently re-evaluated, and no evidence exists that supports any of these wild allegations.

Dental Sealants

Dental sealants are thin plastic coatings that are put on the chewing part of the teeth to prevent decay. They are applied to adult teeth in the back of the mouth.

Sealants make teeth slippery which makes it harder for germs to stick to teeth. Sealants, when applied to children's permanent teeth, will help prevent cavities throughout their childhood, teenage years, and possibly even beyond.

Sealants can save time, money, and the discomfort sometimes associated with dental fillings. Sealants do NOT hurt. Waushara County Health Department sealants are billed to the Seal-a-Smile grant or to Medical Assistance, so there is no cost to you, the parent.

You can call the Waushara County Health Department at 920-787-6590 to set up your child's first appointment today.