

SILVER DIAMINE FLUORIDE PATIENT FACT SHEET



WHAT IS SILVER DIAMINE FLUORIDE?

Silver diamine fluoride (SDF) is an odorless liquid that contains silver particles and fluoride. It is applied by a dentist, or other dental provider, directly to cavities with a small brush. SDF is used to stop cavities from getting worse, and help keep teeth healthy.



WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF SDF?

SDF can help stop cavities from getting worse, which will delay or prevent the need for more invasive treatments such as fillings, crowns, or extractions (pulling teeth). SDF also helps relieve tooth sensitivity. SDF is a fast, easy, and painless treatment—your dentist will not need to use drills or anesthesia injections. SDF may be a good option for people who have trouble with other types of cavity treatments, including for cavities that need more than one treatment, are difficult to treat, or people with limited access to dental care. Very young children, persons with intellectual/developmental disabilities, and older adults may also prefer SDF. SDF application is recommended every 6 to 12 months to stop cavities from getting worse.



IS SDF SAFE?

Yes! There have been no reported cases of major health risks or severe reactions to SDF. SDF does contain silver, however, so it should not be used for people with allergies to silver or ulcers in the mouth.



WHAT OTHER TREATMENTS ARE THERE?

Other treatments for cavities include fillings or crowns, and extraction (pulling teeth). These treatments may require anesthesia or sedation.



WANT MORE INFORMATION ABOUT SDF?

American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry. (2017). Use of silver diamine fluoride for dental caries management in children and adolescents, including those with special health care needs. Reference Manual, 39(6), 146-155. Available at www.aapd.org/media/Policies_Guidelines/G_SDF.pdf.

Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors. (2017). Silver diamine fluoride (SDF) fact sheet. Available at www.astdd.org/www/docs/sdf-fact-sheet-09-07-2017.pdf.

WHAT ARE THE SIDE EFFECTS OF SDF?

SDF has cosmetic side effects, such as temporary brown or white stains on skin and gums that have been touched by SDF, which can last up to 3 weeks. SDF also permanently stains tooth cavities black, however, the healthy parts of the tooth will not be stained. It is important to know that teeth will continue to decay and have cavities if there is no change in dental care habits (such as brushing teeth and avoiding sugary drinks and snacks).

BEFORE TREATMENT



AFTER TREATMENT



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THE MEDICAID EVIDENCE-BASED DECISION PROJECT (MED)

MED, housed at the Center for Evidence-based Policy at Oregon Health & Science University, is a collaboration of state agencies that produces reports and other tools to help state policymakers make the best, evidence-based decisions for improving health outcomes.