

What is fluoride?	Fluoride is a mineral found in nature and throughout the earth's crust. In nature, fluoride can be found in water and many types of fish. In dental offices, fluoride treatments have been used for years to strengthen tooth enamel and prevent cavities.
What is the fluoride varnish program?	The Health Department began the fluoride varnish program in 2003 by training all nurses to apply the varnish in the health centers. In the spring of 2009, Public Health Dental Hygienists will begin applying the varnish in local schools as well.
What is fluoride varnish?	Fluoride varnish is a quick drying, caramel-colored, sticky material that is painted on all tooth surfaces in the mouth.
How is fluoride varnish applied?	Fluoride varnish is quickly and easily applied to the tooth surface using a small disposable brush. Varnish takes less than 2 minutes to apply, which makes it a great option for children and those who have special needs.
How often can fluoride varnish be applied?	Fluoride varnish can be applied two to four times a year or more frequently if the child is at higher risk of tooth decay.
Who can apply fluoride varnish?	Fluoride varnish can be applied by dental professionals and public health dental hygienists, and nurses who have been certified to place varnish.
Is fluoride varnish visible?	Yes. Fluoride varnish may temporarily look brown or orange immediately after it is applied. This discoloration will go away after tooth brushing, which shouldn't be done until the following day.
How long does fluoride varnish last?	Fluoride varnish is a temporary material that continues to release fluoride for hours after it is applied to the tooth. Some studies have shown the release of fluoride may last up to 28 weeks following the application.
How effective is fluoride varnish?	Fluoride varnish has been shown to be highly effective in strengthening the outer layer of teeth called enamel and it reduces tooth decay on the smooth tooth surfaces as well as the pits and fissures of back teeth.
Who is eligible for the Health Department's fluoride varnish program?	Children up to 6 years of age and those with special needs.
Is fluoride varnish safe?	Yes. Fluoride varnish has a higher concentration of fluoride than fluoride foams, rinses or gels used in dental offices. Due to the fact that fluoride varnish is thicker in consistency and has a quick drying time, it is less likely that a child will swallow the varnish during application.
Where can I get more information on dental health or the fluoride varnish program?	If you are interested in learning more about the Health Department's fluoride varnish program, please call 502-222-3516. For more information about dental health online, visit the following sites:

American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry
American Association of Public Health Dentistry
American Dental Association
American Dental Hygienists' Association

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Oral Health
Resources
Kentucky Oral Health Program
Kentucky Youth Advocates: Children's Dental Health Access in
Kentucky