



Smiles for Ohio

Fluoride Varnish (S40-FV) Program

2012

What is Fluoride Varnish?

Fluoride varnish (FV) is a highly concentrated form of fluoride that is applied to tooth surfaces to prevent new cavities and help reverse early demineralization (white spots) of the tooth enamel. Fluoride varnish is a resin or synthetic base that sets quickly on contact with teeth in the presence of saliva, adhering to the tooth for several hours. Developed more than thirty years ago in Europe, FV is available by prescription only and can be quickly applied to a child's teeth by dental and non-dental primary care providers. Application does not require special equipment, is well-received by very young children and prevents Early Childhood Caries (ECC).



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What is Early Childhood Caries?

Early Childhood Caries (ECC) affects the primary teeth of infants and toddlers and is caused by frequent and prolonged exposure to carbohydrates in the presence of oral bacteria. ECC can be a devastating problem for young children and their families. ECC can result in pain, infection, malocclusion and difficulty chewing. It has been associated with poor weight gain and an increased risk of dental decay in adult teeth.

Treatment of ECC may require extensive restorative services, with costs to treat a case of ECC easily reaching \$2,000 to \$3,000 per child. Each year, only seven percent of Ohio's children eligible for Medicaid receive dental services through Medicaid. Yet, nearly 92 percent of Ohio's children eligible for Medicaid receive either an initial or periodic health screen through a primary care physician. If the primary care provider is more likely to see these high-risk children, it makes sense to work with family physicians and pediatricians to prevent ECC and link young children with dental homes.

Web-Based Training

Smiles for Ohio - Fluoride Varnish Training for Primary Medical Care Providers Serving Young Children Enrolled in Medicaid is an award-winning Web-based curriculum developed by the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) that consists of four modules, each designed to provide physicians and other health care providers with the knowledge needed to reduce dental caries among children aged 3 and under. The training is free-of-charge and may be taken for medical (1.0 AMA PRA Category 1) and nursing (1.25 CNE) continuing education credit. To access the Smiles for Ohio—FV training, go to <http://www.ohiodentalclinics.com/curricula/smiles/index.html>.

"Parents are grateful for the fluoride varnish program and the opportunity to prevent Early Childhood Caries. It is easy and quick to apply at the end of the physical exam. Fluoride varnish application is definitely within the scope of practice for doctors and advanced practice nurses and is a preventive service like immunizations."

Dr. James Duffee
Rocking Horse Center
Springfield, Ohio

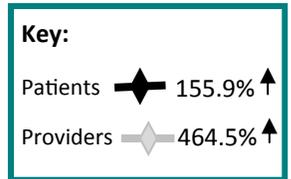
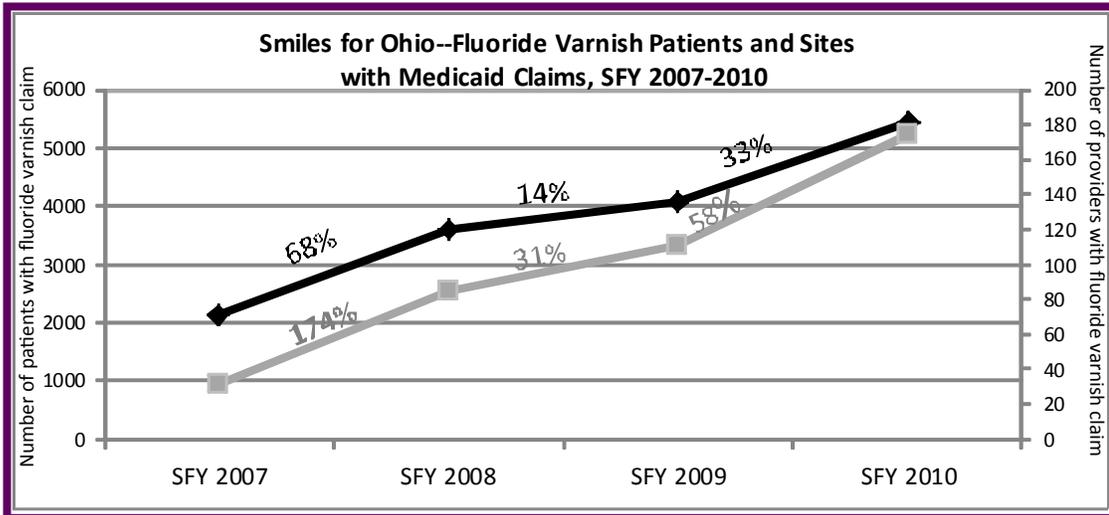


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Did You Know?

In State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2010, more than 5,000 children aged 3 and under have benefited from the application of fluoride varnish, provided by more than 175 non-dental providers in the State of Ohio. The graph below shows how the program has grown in recent years. There has been more than a 155 percent increase in children receiving fluoride varnish applications and a 464 percent increase in providers (non-dental) applying FV between SFY2007 and SFY2010.



Medicaid Coverage of Fluoride Varnish Application by Non-Dental Health Providers

Since July 2006, Ohio physicians and advanced practice nurses can be reimbursed by Medicaid for the application of fluoride varnish (FV) for children up to their third birthday. Eligible providers can provide a FV treatment during the course of a well or sick child examination. Medicaid reimbursement is limited to one application every 180 days.



Referrals to a dental home for children who exhibit signs of oral health problems are an integral part of the Smiles for Ohio Fluoride Varnish Program. Providing fluoride varnish and education about the causes of Early Childhood Caries can help decrease your patient's risk for tooth decay throughout their lifetime.



Assistance with Billing

This service is reimbursable by Medicaid (\$15.00) when provided in addition to a well or sick child visit, but cannot be the sole reason for the visit. In order to be reimbursed, primary care providers must submit current dental terminology (CDT) code D1203 on a physician claim form. Coverage for FV application is limited to one application every one hundred and eighty days. The FV reimbursement code includes **three components**, each of which must be performed: 1) oral assessment, 2) varnish application and 3) referral to a dentist, as necessary.

Medical providers with questions on Medicaid billing can contact the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services provider call center at 1-800-686-1516. If you need technical assistance, contact the Ombudsman Unit at 614-752-9551. You can also visit the provider assistance Web page at: http://jfs.ohio.gov/ohp/providers/OM_MAC.stm

Contact Information

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Oral Health Section

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