FLUORIDE

FLUORIDE IS A NATURALLY OCCURRING ELEMENT THAT IS USED IN DENTISTRY TO HELP PREVENT CAVITIES. UNLIKE OTHER MINERALS, FLUORIDE PERMANENTLY BONDS TO THE ENAMEL OF YOUR TOOTH AND WILL NOT LEACH OUT OVER TIME. IF CONSISTENTLY APPLIED EARLY ENOUGH IN THE DECAY PROCESS, FLUORIDE CAN RE-MINERALIZE YOUR ENAMEL AND REVERSE THE FORMATION OF A CAVITY.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **What is Fluoride?**
   Fluoride is a chemical ion of the element fluorine. Fluoride is found naturally in water, foods, soil and several minerals.

2. **What are the benefits of Fluoride?**
   Fluoride helps protect teeth from decay and cavities. Teeth with fluoride in the enamel simply resist acids better than teeth that have not been exposed to fluoride. When bacteria in the mouth combine with sugars, acid is produced that can dissolve tooth structure and cause cavities or erode away the enamel. Fluoride protects teeth from demineralization caused by the acid. It can also help with repairing enamel that has been mildly damaged by acids.

   Studies have shown water fluoridation continues to be effective in reducing tooth decay by 20- 40%, even with widespread availability of fluoride from other sources, such as fluoride toothpaste and rinses.

3. **Who should have Fluoride?**
   Both children and adults can benefit from fluoride use. Fluoride is especially helpful for those with a history of tooth decay, poor dental hygiene, a high acid/sugar diet, and those who experience dry mouth.

4. **What are the risks of Fluoride?**
   As with any medical treatment, toxic effects can occur with extreme doses. Overdose is possible, for example, if a small child consumes an entire tube of tooth paste or ingests multiple fluoride supplement tablets. Fluoride can cause discoloration of enamel if excess amounts are used over long periods of time while the teeth are developing.

5. **What are the alternatives to Fluoride?**
   There are no known alternatives to fluoride that provide equal benefit for the health and strength of tooth enamel.

6. **What are the risk of not using Fluoride?**
   Generally, there is a significantly increased risk of developing cavities.

Before Fluoride Treatment

Fluoride Being Applied

After Fluoride Treatment