

Patient information

Silver Diamine Fluoride (SDF) Dental Treatment

Liverpool University Dental Hospital

Why have I been given this leaflet?

You, your child, or the person you care for has dental decay affecting their teeth. The dentist/dental therapist thinks that Silver Diamine Fluoride (SDF) liquid is an appropriate treatment option.

What is SDF liquid?

SDF is a clear liquid containing silver and fluoride that can be used to treat tooth decay as well as tooth sensitivity.

It is a simple, quick and effective way of slowing or stopping the progression of tooth decay. Best results are achieved when children and adults also brush their teeth with fluoride toothpaste and control the sugars in their diet.

Why is SDF liquid recommended for me?

Dental decay can progress rapidly. By applying SDF liquid, decay can be prevented from progressing further, which reduces the risk of toothache and/or infection.

What is involved in the treatment?

To protect lips and gums, the dentist/dental therapist will apply petroleum jelly (or an alternative) to the area and place cotton wool next to the teeth being treated with SDF liquid.

The teeth will then be dried and a small amount of the SDF liquid painted on to the teeth for one to three minutes. Following this the teeth are dried a second time. Sometimes, the dentist/dental therapist may then place a filling over the top.

This is all done in one appointment. A second appointment may be made two to four weeks later to check the teeth and apply more SDF liquid if needed. SDF liquid is then usually reapplied every six months.

How should I prepare for the visit?

There are no special preparations required. However, SDF cannot be used when a patient has:

- An allergy to silver, fluoride, potassium, iodine, ammonia or another component of SDF. (a full list of constituents is available if required)
- Painful gums, ulcers or sores in the mouth.
- Thyroid problems.

Please tell the dentist/dental therapist if you think that any of the above apply.

What are the advantages of SDF liquid?

- It is a simple procedure that reduces sensitivity and slows down or prevents tooth decay.
- In many instances SDF is more effective than fluoride varnish.
- It is a minimally invasive intervention, so does not require a local anaesthetic to be given or a dental drill used.

What are the disadvantages of SDF liquid?

- There may be a metallic taste after the SDF is painted on the teeth which will resolve quickly by itself.
- SDF permanently discolours the decayed area of the tooth black. Healthy parts of the tooth do not discolour. SDF is often used on baby teeth which will fall out – but avoids a child having a GA and multiple teeth extracted.
- It can temporarily stain the skin, lips, gums and cheeks brown or white for one to three weeks, this will then disappear.
- SDF can also discolour tooth coloured fillings. Polishing these fillings can help remove this stain but it may stay visible at the join between the tooth and the filling.
- In the unlikely event of SDF being accidentally spilled on clothes, it can leave a stain that does not come out.

What are the alternatives?

- Keeping the tooth under review, but it is likely the decay will get worse.
- Using fluoride varnish on the decayed tooth.
- Filling the tooth.
- Placing a silver cap/crown (in children only).
- Removing (extracting) the tooth.

Please discuss with the dentist/dental therapist which options are best for the affected teeth.

You may be asked to sign a written consent form before treatment with SDF; it is not a legal requirement to get written consent – however some clinicians may choose to do so. This would be after the dentist/dental therapist has discussed the risks and benefits of all the options available. If you have questions about the treatment, please ask the dentist/dental therapist.

What else do I need to know?

SDF is fully licensed in many countries around the world where it has been safely used for many years. In the UK it is licensed for treating sensitivity only and has not been widely used until recently to manage dental decay. It can be used for decay outside of its current UK license ('off label' use). It is being more widely recommended to treat decay, including by the Office of the Chief Dental Officer, England.

If the SDF does not stop the decay progressing, other treatment may be required such as fillings or tooth removal. It is vital to follow the preventative advice (e.g. regarding tooth brushing and diet) that has been given by the dentist/dental therapist to prevent decay worsening, or developing in other teeth.

If you have any questions, please ask your dentist/dental therapist.

Feedback

Your feedback is important to us and helps us influence care in the future.

Following your discharge from hospital or attendance at your outpatient appointment you will receive a text asking if you would recommend our service to others. Please take the time to text back, you will not be charged for the text and can opt out at any point. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

Further information

Paediatric Dentistry

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Special Care Dentistry Department

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Adapted from The British Society of Paediatric Dentistry's Silver Diamine Fluoride (SDF) Liquid Treatment patient information leaflet.

https://www.bsdpd.co.uk/Portals/0/BSPD_SDF%20patient%20leaflet_For%20printing.pdf

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All Trust approved information is available on request in alternative formats, including other languages, easy read, large print, audio, Braille, moon and electronically.

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در صورت تمایل می‌توانید کلیه اطلاعات تصویب شده توسط اتحادیه در رابطه با بیماران را به اشکال مختلف در دسترس داشته باشید، از جمله به زبانهای دیگر، به زبان ساده، چاپ درشت، صوت، خط مخصوص کوران، مون و بصورت روی خطی موجود است.

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