

What to expect from new dental program

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For many years most of the children at Warm Springs have experienced tooth decay, or cavities, starting before first grade.

In the past, the only way dentists could treat this disease was to drill out the decayed part of the tooth and replace it with a hard material to fill the tooth cavity.

It is difficult and often impossible for the dentist to treat young children this way in the clinic because the procedure is painful and the child is too young to cooperate with the procedure.

Therefore, about half of all the Warm Springs children have required treatment in the hospital under general anesthesia to have their tooth decay treated. A few children have even required this

more than once. This is a difficult experience for the child and the family. Dental treatment at the hospital often is only a temporary solution, and is very expensive for the Dental Program.

Also, as with any hospital surgery, there is always some danger when a young child receives general anesthesia.

Silver nitrate procedure

Other dental programs in Oregon who have been using the silver nitrate to treat tooth cavities in young children have found that the treatment is very effective in stopping the active tooth decay.

Later, the children can often be treated in the clinic without any shots by filling the tooth cavity with a tooth-colored material.

The recommended sched-

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ule for treating new tooth cavities is for the child to receive an application of the silver nitrate about once a month for a total of five treatments.

The silver nitrate is applied with a tiny dental brush not much bigger than the point of a pencil. One drop of the silver nitrate will usually be enough to treat all the cavities in the mouth.

Fluoride varnish, which the Warm Springs Dental Clinic has been using for many years, is then applied immediately on top of the silver nitrate to

help strengthen the tooth enamel.

The entire procedure usually takes only a few minutes, and is not at all painful to the child.

When tooth cavities are treated this way, within a short time the cavity itself turns a dark color and sometimes black: This is good! This means the silver nitrate is working to stop the infection and keep the cavity from going deeper into the tooth.

After the tooth decay has been controlled by the silver nitrate, there are several options for what to do next (see the article at right).

Lula Smith, EFDA, and I will explain these options to each parent before beginning the first silver nitrate treatment. For any questions about this new program, contact the Warm Springs Dental Clinic at 541-553-2462.

Options after treatment

Applying the silver nitrate to the tooth cavity will kill all the infection, and will turn the cavity very dark in color: This is good!

It means the cavity will not get deeper. At this point there are several options for the parents of the child:

Option no. 1

Fill the tooth cavity with a material called glass ionomer cement (GIC) that the Warm Springs Dental Clinic has been using for several years.

The GIC is tooth colored, and acts like a fast-acting glue or cement. A few minutes after the GIC has been put into the tooth cavity, it becomes almost as hard as the tooth enamel.

If all the tooth decay has been stopped, most of the time this does not require the child to receive a shot to make the gums numb.

The GIC is applied like a paste to fill the cavity, and this takes the dentist only a couple of minutes.

In many cases, this GIC will remain in the tooth cavity until the child naturally has the tooth come out as the permanent teeth come in later.

If the GIC needs to be replaced later, this can also be done in just a few minutes with no shots.

Option no. 2

Do not do any additional treatment.

See **DENTAL** on 5

**Warm Springs
Health &
Wellness**

Medical Management of Caries

Arrest Tooth decay with Silver Nitrate & fluoride varnish

Cavities and Germs

Cavities are holes in the teeth caused by germs called caries. The caries germs live on your Teeth and like to use sugar in your food to make acid that eats the teeth-just like the acid in the battery of your car.

If you don't get these holes taken care of, they will get bigger and bigger. People who have lots of these germs in their mouth will keep getting cavities. Getting cavities filled with lots of these germs in your mouth is like putting a new roof on a house while it is on fire.

Babies are not born with this bacteria and can "catch" it from others. It is often mom who passes the bacteria to her children without her knowing it. Some common ways the infection gets passed are:

- Allowing the child to put fingers in an adult mouth
- sharing sippy cups or bottles
- By putting a pacifier in their own "mouth to clean it"-then in the babies mouth.



Special points of interest:

- Only the decay/Cavities will turn black or dark in color. Healthy teeth will not turn black.
- No Shots
- Kills the infection in the tooth
- If you have any questions about our new program please call the dental office and ask to speak with Dr.Mendoza D.D.S & Lula Smith E.F.D.A (541)553-2462

Why choose the medical Management of Caries when I just want to get my teeth fixed?!

- There are billions of germs in the mouth hiding every place you could imagine including under filling
- When a filling is placed in the mouth that is infected, it is possible that the germs will continue to create the acid that eats

teeth because the cavity causing germs are still living in your mouth-even under the filling !

- The "drill and fill method is the most common method of dental care in America. But there is another way to help you to control the infection,

without needles or drills, by using the Medical Management of caries

PUT OUT THE FIRE FIRST!

