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PIT AND FISSURE SEALANTS:

Sealants can be bonded to molar premolar teeth to prevent and reduce decay that develops from the pits and fissures in the biting surface of these teeth.

The first molar teeth that erupts at six years of age are very susceptible to decay and are often already decayed when they come through. Most parents are not aware, that their six year old has permanent teeth, because no milk teeth are lost. The first molars erupt behind the primary teeth without a primary tooth exfoliating.

The first molars are susceptible to decay, because the enamel has not matured and the biting surface is full of deep fissures that plaque can grow in. These fissures can be thinner than a toothbrush bristle and plaque cannot be removed.

Before sealants are placed, the surface is made plaque free by thoroughly cleaning with air-abrasion and etching. The white sealants are then bonded to the surface. It flows into the fissures and fills these. An intense light is used to harden the sealant to the surface.

Sealants wear over time, but can last many years. Decay is very common during the first 21 years of life and fissure sealants can greatly reduce the incidence of occlusal decay (decay that starts from the biting surface were fissure are present). Even if sealants need to be replaced every few years the cost and benefit far out way the cost of restoring teeth.