

DENTAL FLUOROSIS – WHAT IS IT?



Dental fluorosis is an irreversible condition caused by excessive ingestion of fluoride during the tooth forming years. It is characterized by a change in the appearance of the tooth's enamel. These changes can vary from barely noticeable white spots in mild forms to staining and pitting in the more severe forms.

Dental fluorosis only occurs when younger children consume too much fluoride, from any source, over long periods when teeth are developing under the gums.

“MY CHILD HAS DENTAL FLUOROSIS. WHAT CAN WE DO TO FIX IT?”

The damage that dental fluorosis causes to the internal matrix of the teeth is permanent. There is no way to reverse this damage. However, there are ways to “hide the damage” – to treat the surface of the teeth so as to hide the discoloration.

Treatment options for fluorosis vary and will depend in part on the severity of the fluorosis. Some of the more common treatments include:

- **Abrasion:** Abrasion involves finely sanding off the outer layer of the enamel. It is a common approach when the fluorosis is mild. However, if the fluorosis is of a more advanced severity, abrasion is probably not a good idea as it can bring to the surface of the teeth a highly-porous enamel that will be prone to attrition.
- **Composite bonding:** Composite bonding first involves lightly roughening the area of the damaged enamel. After etching the enamel, a composite resin (with a color matching your teeth) is “glued” on to the exterior of the tooth. ▶

- **Porcelain veneers/laminates or crowns:** Made out of porcelain, veneers form a ceramic shell over the surface of the tooth. Veneers may need to be replaced after several years, however, which can become quite expensive. Crowns are capping the severely discoloured teeth.

If dental fluorosis is left untreated it can cause embarrassment for school-aged children resulting in psychological stress and damaged self-esteem. Furthermore there is mounting evidence that dental fluorosis in its more advanced stages can leave teeth more susceptible to cavities.

To determine which method of treating fluorosis will be best for you, contact CIDC and make your appointment today.



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