

# Silver Diamine Fluoride

## Patient Fact Sheet

### What is Silver Diamine Fluoride?

Silver diamine fluoride (SDF) is an odorless liquid that contains silver particles and fluoride. It is applied by a dentist, or other dental provider, directly to cavities with a small brush. SDF is used to stop cavities from getting worse and help keep teeth healthy. We feel it is a great option for younger patients under the age of 3 ½ years old who are unable to cooperate yet for dental treatment.

### What are the Benefits of SDF?

SDF can help stop cavities from getting worse, which will delay or prevent the need for more invasive treatments such as fillings, crowns, or extractions (pulling teeth). SDF also helps relieve tooth sensitivity. SDF is a fast, easy, and painless treatment-your dentist will not need to use drills or local anesthesia. SDF may be a good option for very young children and patients with special needs. SDF application is recommended every 6 months for up to 18 months to stop cavities from getting worse. At that point our office recommends restoring the affected teeth once the child is old enough to better tolerate the procedure.

### Is SDF Safe?

Yes! There have been no reported cases of major health risks or severe reactions to SDF. SDF does contain silver, however, so it should not be used for people with allergies to silver or ulcers in the mouth.

### How is SDF Treatment Done?

- Teeth are dried and a small amount of SDF is brushed on areas of active tooth decay. This takes approximately 90 seconds per tooth.
- Care must be taken to avoid allowing SDF to touch the gums, skin, or clothing.
- When decay is treated, it will turn dark showing that the SDF is working.
- Early treatment can prevent more damage to the tooth.
- When the patient reaches an age where they're able to better cooperate, a filling or other treatment may still be recommended
- For best results, SDF should be applied every 6 months after the initial applications

### **What are the Side Effects of SDF?**

SDF has cosmetic side effects, such as temporary brown or white stains on skin and gums that have been touched by SDF, which can last up to 3 weeks. SDF also permanently stains tooth cavities black, however, the healthy parts of the tooth will not be stained. It is important to know that teeth will continue to decay and have cavities if there is no change in dental care habits (such as brushing teeth and avoiding sugary drinks and snacks).