

Preventive Resin Restoration (PRR) Information Sheet

What are PRR's and why does my child need them?

First a little background information: Many of the permanent teeth develop with very deep grooves. These irregularly shaped surfaces are difficult to keep clean and are prone to decay. I generally recommend pit and fissure sealants (protective coatings) as an easy and cost effective way to prevent cavities from occurring on these teeth. The cost per sealant is \$48.00. Sealants are wonderful and very effective (see Dr. Mel's Sealant Guarantee below).

Occasionally, some of these deeply grooved back teeth may have formed incompletely, allowing a cavity to begin. Traditionally, this defect would be treated with a silver (amalgam) filling requiring the removal of the cavity *and* much of the surrounding healthy tooth; this often weakens the tooth making it more prone to needing future re-treatment. Despite much negative media attention to these silver fillings, I still feel it to be the material of choice under *certain* circumstances. However, I also feel there is a better alternative for these early defects: the preventive resin restoration (PRR).

Fortunately, white filling materials (composite resins) have advanced to the point where we can use a much more conservative approach. We can now remove only the decayed portion of the tooth and then fill this small hole with a tooth-colored material. A preventive sealant is then placed on top to minimize the chance of any new decay on that tooth (the cost of this sealant is included in the fee charged for the PRR). Though the PRR is slightly more expensive than a silver filling, it leaves the patient with a stronger tooth that is more resistant to future cavities. Another advantage is that these tooth-colored fillings can most often be done without the need of local anesthesia; Since they can often be done with no "shots," multiple PRR'S, if needed, can commonly be done in fewer appointments saving time away from work and school.

Will My Insurance Cover These Procedures?

Many insurance companies recognize significant benefits of sealants and provide for them as they do for any of their prevention-based procedures at 100% coverage (some companies have been slow to extend these benefits to baby teeth and the smaller premolars). Please be aware that while many insurance companies have also come to realize the benefit of the conservative and cosmetic PRR's (and provide coverage as for any other filling, typically 80%), other carriers prefer to use the standard of paying a percentage of the "least expensive alternative." Accordingly, they may pay a portion of a lowered fee (for a silver filling example), effectively cutting their costs and increasing the amount out of your pocket. While our computer system is designed to help us detect which companies provide for this lesser amount it is not foolproof. If this cost difference is a major concern to you please contact your insurance carrier directly and ask them how they would cover our fees for sealants (tell them "ADA code 1351") or our \$125 fee for the PRR ("ADA code 2392").

Dr. Mel's Sealant Guarantee

Because of my complete confidence in the effectiveness of sealants placed *in this office* we are able to offer the following guarantee: Provided that your child continues to be evaluated regularly in our 6-month recall program, all sealants will be guaranteed for a period of five years. If a sealant chips or falls off during that period it will be replaced free of charge. If a cavity develops on the protected *chewing surface* of a sealed tooth we will apply the full amount paid out of pocket by you toward the filling that would be needed. There is no extra charge for this guarantee; we provide it for every sealant we place.

Our Further Pledge to You

I will continue to strive to keep you on the cutting edge of developing dental technologies to provide your children with the best pediatric care possible. PRR's have been recommended based upon this pledge; if you wish to discuss alternatives please let me know. I welcome your questions about this procedure or any others which might be of concern to you.

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Individualized Preventive Dental Care for Toddlers, Children through Adolescence and those with Special Needs

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