



Fast Facts about SDF

SDF has been approved by Health Canada since 2017.⁽¹⁾ It has been used in Japan for over 40 years and in Australia and China for over 10 years. There have been no reported cases of major health risks or severe reactions to SDF. It does contain silver, however, so it should not be used for people with allergies to silver or ulcers in the mouth.⁽²⁾

How is it applied?

SDF is applied by a dental health professional, like a dental hygienist, who will first dry the tooth (or teeth) and then apply a drop of SDF. The liquid is then allowed to soak into the cavity for one minute. *If necessary, this procedure may be repeated in about 6 months.*

What are the benefits of SDF?

- stops cavities from getting bigger
- can prevent and reduce tooth sensitivity
- application is quick and painless
- freezing (needles) or sedation is not needed
- the cost of SDF treatment is a fraction of the cost for a filling

Who may benefit from SDF?

People:

- on a wait list for dental care
- with more decay than can be treated in one appointment
- with baby teeth that will soon fall out
- with limited mobility who have challenges accessing dental care
- with special needs, dental phobias, intellectual/behavioural conditions
- living in remote locations

Important Considerations

- Cavities treated with SDF turn black or brown. This will be most noticeable on front teeth.
- It can also stain skin for 2-3 weeks, if accidentally touched.
- *In most cases, SDF is not considered an alternative to permanent fillings, but is an effective tool in managing cavities in specific clients.*



References:

1. Farmer, JW, et al. (2018). Effectiveness, safety, and acceptance of silver diamine fluoride therapy and its implications for dental hygiene practice. https://files.cdha.ca/profession/SDF_Position_paper_cjdh_v52n3_FINAL.pdf
2. FNHA Silver Diamine Fluoride Fact Sheet. (2020). <https://www.fnha.ca/WellnessSite/WellnessDocuments/FNHA-Silver-Diamine-Fluoride-Fact-Sheet.pdf>

Silver Diamine Fluoride (SDF): A New Way to Manage Tooth Decay

What is SDF?

SDF is a clear, odourless liquid that contains silver particles and fluoride. It kills the bacteria that causes cavities, and helps harden the decayed area.

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