

Dental Sealants and Bisphenol-A

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The October 2010 *Journal of Pediatrics* published a study about Bisphenol-A (BPA) and dental sealant materials.

While BPA is rarely used as an ingredient in dental materials, it may be present as a by-product of the application process. BPA from dental sealants may be found in saliva in small amounts for up to three hours after sealants are placed, then levels quickly drop off. How much, if any, BPA is absorbed by the body and whether that has an effect on human health is not known. According to the authors of the article, the benefits of dental sealants outweigh the possible risk of a brief BPA exposure.

Dental materials are far less likely to cause BPA exposure than other consumer goods such as plastic bottles and linings of metal cans. Exposure to BPA from dental sealants is about 200 times lower than the level considered safe by the Environmental Protection Agency. While CDA believes the current evidence does not indicate a health risk related to the use of dental sealants, other products, such as glass ionomer, can be substituted and are BPA free; ionomers however, are less effective in preventing cavities than the standard sealants materials.

Exposure to BPA from dental sealants can be minimized by the use of a rubber dam (a device used to isolate the tooth from the rest of the mouth) or by cleaning and rinsing the tooth surfaces right after placing dental sealants.

CDA continues to monitor this issue for new information. CDA agrees with the authors of the *Pediatrics* article in that the benefits of dental sealants far outweigh the potential risk of a brief and small BPA exposure.