

**Virginia Department of Health (VDH)**  
**Guidelines for Application of Fluoride Varnish under a Standing Order**

Effective July 1, 2008, Section § 54.1-3408 of the Pharmacy Act allows a dentist to provide a standing order for a nurse or dental hygienist to place fluoride varnish. A district director or dentist may sign for appropriate staff providing this service.

Because either a dentist or physician may sign the standing order for a registered nurse or dental hygienist following the new guidelines, if services are billed the process should follow the prescriptive authority.

*CHAPTER 694*

*An Act to amend and reenact § 54.1-3408 of the Code of Virginia, relating to administration of drugs.*

*[S 271] Approved March 27, 2008*

*03/27/08 Governor: Approved by Governor-Chapter 694 (effective 7/1/08)*  
*§ 54.1-3408 U. A nurse or a dental hygienist may possess and administer topical fluoride varnish to the teeth of children aged six months to three years pursuant to an oral or written order or a standing protocol issued by a doctor of medicine or, osteopathic medicine, or dentistry that conforms to standards adopted by the Virginia Department of Health.*

**Registered Nurses and Dental Hygienists may apply fluoride varnish to the teeth of young children who receive home visits or who present to Pediatric Clinics, Immunization Clinics, WIC, and other health district programs.**

**Training**

Registered Nurses must have completed the “Bright Smiles for Babies” training conducted by Virginia Department of Health, Division of Dental Health.

**Procedure**

- 1) The provider shall apply 5% sodium fluoride varnish in a thin layer to the surfaces of erupted primary teeth up to two times per year.
- 2) The amount to be applied shall be no more than a single .25 ml unit dose for children.
- 3) An oral health screening shall be conducted and documented.
- 4) Oral health information will be provided for parent and child, appropriate for the age, cultural background, and risk level.
- 5) Post-application instructions will be given to the parent.

**Physician Orders:**

Varnish may be applied without an individual patient prescription or physician order by registered nurses and dental hygienists under the following conditions:

- 1) The child is less than 6 years of age with erupted primary teeth.
- 2) A signed consent is obtained from the parent /legal custodian/guardian of the child.
- 3) There is no sensitivity to colophony or colophonium (ingredients in the varnish). There are no soft tissue contraindications to applying the varnish, such as ulcerations of the gingival tissue (ulcerative gingivitis) or generalized inflammation of the gingival tissue (gingival stomatitis).

**Dentist Orders:**

Varnish may be applied without an individual patient prescription or treatment plan by registered nurses and dental hygienists under the following conditions:

- 1) The child is 6 months to 3 years of age (to the third birthday) with erupted primary teeth.
- 2) A signed consent is obtained from the parent /legal custodian/guardian of the child.
- 3) There is no sensitivity to colophony or colophonium (ingredients in the varnish).
- 4) There are no soft tissue contraindications to applying the varnish, such as ulcerations of the gingival tissue (ulcerative gingivitis) or generalized inflammation of the gingival tissue (gingival stomatitis).

VDH Staff (nurse/hygienist) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Print name)

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
(District Director/ DentistSignature)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Print name)

Health District/Office: \_\_\_\_\_

Effective Date: \_\_\_\_\_