Fluoride Varnish is highly effective at reducing tooth decay if it is applied twice a year. For those people with additional needs, The Department of Health recommends this should be at least 6 monthly for children and 6 monthly for adults. Scientific studies have shown that Fluoride Varnish gives added protection to teeth against decay when used in addition to brushing teeth regularly with fluoride toothpaste.

What is Fluoride Varnish?
Fluoride Varnish is a pale yellow gel that sets quickly when applied to teeth using a soft brush, it has a pleasant taste and a fruity smell.

Other fluoride supplements
Some people may be taking fluoride drops or tablets. These should not be taken on the day of the fluoride application and for two days after. After that, continue as directed.

People who may be unsuitable for Fluoride Varnish
Some people will not have Fluoride Varnish applied because they have previously been hospitalised due to asthma or allergies - the main allergen is colophony, a pine based resin. A decision will be taken as to whether it is appropriate for Fluoride Varnish to be applied after discussion with the dentist.

Fluoride Varnish won't be applied if there are sore areas in the mouth

Are there any risks?
Children who swallow too much fluoride over long periods of time can develop white spots on their teeth. However, the risk of developing white spots as a result of Fluoride Varnish is very small.

After the application
Fluoride Varnish should remain on the teeth for the rest of the day and also overnight to provide the most benefit.

- No food or drink should be taken for an hour after application and hard foods should be avoided for the rest of the day.
- Please do not brush the teeth on the night of application.
- From the next day brush at least twice daily, in the morning and last thing at night using toothpaste containing at least 1350-1500ppm (parts per million) fluoride.

People being seen by other dental services
You should let your dental practice know if Fluoride Varnish has recently been applied elsewhere. This allows the dental practice to space out the Fluoride Varnish applications to ensure maximum benefit.

Ref: Cochrane Systematic Review (Mainho et al 2013).