Silver Diamine Fluoride:  
Back to the Future  
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Course Objectives

- Explain the history of silver nitrate and silver diamine fluoride (SDF)
- Describe what SDF is and how it works
- Discuss the safety and indications for use of SDF
- Present protocols for SDF application, available products, and follow-up recommendations
- Review CDT codes and recent legislation

History of Silver Nitrate

- Silver Fluoride (AgF):  
  - Used in Japan for approximately 900 years  
  - Intended for cosmetic blackening  
  - Unintended effect was caries prevention
- Silver Nitrate:  
  - Caries arrest protocols documented in the 1800s  
  - 1891: 87 of 140 treated lesions were arrested
**Early 1900’s in the U.S.**

- G.V. Black
  - "Father of Modern Dentistry"
  - In 1908, Black documented protocols for silver nitrate
  - Used to treat troops deployed in World War I
  - Side effect was that the silver nitrate made teeth brittle (loss of Calcium)
  - In 1909, Black traveled to Colorado Springs to learn about "Colorado brown stain", which later proved to be the result of fluoride and led to a reduction in caries
- Percy Howe
  - First research director at Forsythe Institute in Boston and ADA President 1928-1929
  - Became well known for his successful treatment of caries with silver nitrate, that other dental professionals began calling it "Howe’s Solution"
  - Advertised in JADA

**Water Fluoridation**

- In the 1950's, water fluoridation became the focus of prevention and interest in silver nitrate

**Silver Diamine Fluoride**

- Silver Diamine Fluoride (SDF) Development in Japan
  - Built upon AgF success
  - Added remineralization properties of fluoride to antimicrobial properties of silver
  - NH3+ added to silver fluoride for stabilization
  - Mizuho Nishino researched SDF for PhD from 1965-1969
  - Nishino’s research was published in the Journal of Osaka University Dental Society in 1969
  - SDF product by the name Saforide was released
  - Over 2 million bottles sold. Zero adverse outcomes documented.

**Recent Developments in the U.S.**

- FDA Approval in U.S.
  - 2014: FDA approval for dental sensitivity
  - 2015: Elevate Oral Care releases Advantage Arrest (SDF)
  - 2016: Breakthrough Therapy Designation by FDA
  - 2018: SD North America releases Rio Star (SDF+KCI)

- Publicity and Popularity
  - PBS – January 2018
    - [Link](https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/this-new-treatment-could-make-your-next-trip-to-the-dentist-much-better)
  - JADA – August 2018
    - [Link](https://jada.ada.org/article/S0002-8177(18)30232-0/abstract)
Science Behind SDF

- **Formulation**
  - 25% silver (antimicrobial)
  - 8% ammonia (solvent)
  - 5% fluoride (remineralization)
  - Twice the concentration of fluoride is used, but less than half the volume compared to fluoride varnish, so the overall fluoride concentration is less.
  - The rest of the solution is made up of water. In the Elevate Advantage Arrest, there is also <1% blue dye which dissipates as the solution dries.
- **Silver nitrate alone can make teeth brittle**
- Formulations with fluoride help strengthen enamel and are optimal for long-term outcomes.

Multiple Benefits

- Arrests caries
- Prevents caries
- Decreases dentinal sensitivity

Caries Arrest

- **Silver ions**
  - Bactericidal
  - Prevents bacterial growth
  - Deactivates proteins

How Silver Ions Work

- They inhibit the growth of the bacteria by
  - Preventing protein formation
  - Preventing demineralization

Caries Prevention

- **Direct**
  - Remineralizes dentin lesions
  - Increases lesion hardness
  - Prevents demineralization

- **Indirect**
  - Can inhibit plaque bacteria
  - Treated dentin resists biofilm formation

- ‘Zombie Effect’
  - Silver-killed bacteria kill active bacteria

https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2015/05/silver-turns-bacteria-deadly-zombies
Efficacy

- Caries arrest
  - 40-80% arrest with 2/year application.
  - 30-80% arrest with 1/year application.

- Caries prevention
  - 25-70% prevention, outperforms everything by far.
  - Half varnish is ~25% effective with 3-4 applications/year

Caries arrest

- ~90% arrest with 2/year application.
- 40-80% arrest with 1/year application.

Caries prevention

- 25-70% prevention, outperforms everything by far.
- Half varnish is ~25% effective with 3-4 applications/year

Caries prevention

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Indications for Use (and limitations)

- Indications
  - Extreme caries risk (xerostomia, severe ECC)
  - Behavior or medical management challenges
  - More lesions than treatable at 1 visit
  - Difficult or treatable lesions
  - Patients without access to care
  - Patients looking for minimally invasive treatment options

- Contraindications and limitations
  - Possible concern with silver allergy
    - Though some research suggests that this is not a concern because it contains silver ions
  - May sting ulcerated gingiva
    - Can use petroleum jelly to protect gingiva when needed
  - Do not use if there is exposed pulp in lesion
    - Can cause sensitivity and "zinging" feeling
    **No adverse reports in over 80 years in Japan**

Safety

- Silver
  - ~25% silver
  - No known medical risks of ingesting silver
  - Argyria: bluing of the skin
    - EPA lifetime exposure = 1 gram
    - Highest applied dose for 3 permanent teeth = 3.27 mg
    - 1.64 treatments in 1 year = 0.90 mg per treatment

- Toxicity
  - Use one 1 drop per 10kg (22lbs) body weight with weekly intervals
  - This takes into consideration that the lethal subcutaneous dose (LD50) is 188mg/kg and gives a five-hundredfold safety margin (UCSF Protocol)

- Side Effects
  - Possible short section mucosal lesion - self disappear in 48 hours
  - Occasionally teeth become black (caused by the silver precipitating out of the solution)

- Other
  - No research to show safety of SDF in pregnancy or breastfeeding. However, research is available to show that Ag, F, and KI are all safe during pregnancy and breastfeeding in low doses.
Getting Started

- Informed Consent
  - Separate consent is not REQUIRED, but since the products and procedure are "new" to most people, a consent is helpful for patients/parents to fully understand.
  - An extra measure to ensure treatment option discussion has covered all the important points.
  - Should include color photos so that patients/parents can not claim later that they were not aware of the staining/color change that would happen.
  - Sample consent form: www.codha.org/legal

Basic Setup

Protocols

1. Prepare setup with proper isolation and PPE.
   - Plastic-lined tray cover, cotton rolls, paper, dry angles, microbrush, plastic dappen dish, 1-2 drops of SDF, Super-Floss, fluoride varnish, air/water syringe, basic kit with mirror and explorer, gloves, mask, patient bib.
2. Isolate lesion(s) using cotton roll, dry angle, and/or bite block.
3. Dip microbrush in SDF (from dappen dish) and apply a small amount for 60 seconds.
   - Do not need to excavate caries prior to application.
   - Let solution sit dry for 10 seconds. Do not dry with air/water syringe as solution will spread to other areas.
   - Do not light cure!
4. Apply fluoride varnish
   - Helps mask taste of SDF and "seals" over application site so that it does not wash away with saliva or contact mucosa.
   - May use with gauze if fluoride varnish is not desired.

*Note: SDF will stain everything it touches (countertops, clothes, etc.). Be careful to isolate well and only apply to lesions. Intraorally, only demineralized areas will change color. Healthy tooth structure will not stain, and mucosal stains will resolve in approximately 48 hours.
### Product Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantage Arrest (Elevate Oral Care)</th>
<th>Riva Star (SDI)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cost</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit Dose: 10 ml (12 drops)</td>
<td>$4 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottles: 1/250 drops (18 drops)</td>
<td>$0.64 per drop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Storage &amp; Shelf Life</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room Temperature: 3 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refrigeration: 1 year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clinical</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Only</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microwaveable only</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Special Features</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tinted blue so that clinician can see where solution was applied</td>
<td>Additional step of applying potassium iodide can decrease staining</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Considerations</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can be used as a substitute</td>
<td>Can be used as a substitute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructions: Apply as directed and instructions: If in phase 2, evaluation immediately after application is indicated for use in adults over age 21.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Clinical Appearance of SDF Treated Small Intergingival Lesions**

**Clinical Appearance of SDF Treated Extensive Intergingival Lesions**

*Photos from Dr. Jeanette Maclean*
Follow-Up

- Schedule patient for follow-up visit 2-4 weeks after initial application
- Ensure lesion is hard and dark black. If not, reapply
- Place restoration at this visit, if applicable.
- Best results if SDF is reapplied at least twice per year for at least 2 years
- Unless restoration is placed over application site
- SDF treatment can be the definitive treatment, or part of a larger treatment plan, depending on patient’s needs and desires

- Additional treatment options:
  - Can be used to treat interproximal lesions using Superfloss
  - Can be used in combination with other restorations, ideally glass ionomer
  - SMART technique
  - Can be placed same day or at future appointment
  - Can be used for primary crowns (Wild Crowns)
CDT Procedure Codes and Billing

- D1354 - interim caries arresting medicament application
  - When SDF is used primarily to arrest caries, either prior to a restoration placement, or as a way to "buy time" due to cooperation/limitations of patients, or because of medical, behavioral, and physical, or financial limitations.
  - Intended to be used "per tooth"
  - **RECOMMENDED PROCEDURE CODE!**

- D1208 - topical application of fluoride, excluding varnish
  - When SDF is applied to high risk sites such as hypoplastic molars, root surfaces, furcations, restoration margins, unsealed pits and fissures, or to prevent new or secondary lesions

- D9910 - When SDF is used to treat dentinal hypersensitivity

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**SDF + Fuji EQUIVA Fenta to treat a 7 year old**

With severely hypoplastic and hypersensitive

Permanent first molars w/ out sedation or GA

Dr. Jeanette MacLean kidsbeothandbraces.com
Colorado Laws and Rules Regarding SDF

**HB 18-1045**
- Signed into law March 2018
- Full text: [https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb18-1045](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb18-1045)

**Rule XXVI**
- Approved by Colorado Dental Board in June 2018
- Effective August 14, 2018

*CO Rules and Regulations, Rule XXVI is currently being revised to make sure wording is aligned with the wording which exists in the statute. The draft rule was adopted at the May 9th rulemaking hearing and changes will be effective June 30, 2019. For more information, visit www.codha.org/legislative-info*

Colorado Laws and Rules Regarding SDF (cont.)

Requirements for dental hygienists to use SDF in Colorado

- Successfully complete course
  - Minimum of 1 hour, “live and interactive”
  - Approved by AGD/PACE, ADA/CERP, CODA accredited institution, and/or state
  - Carry professional liability insurance, as specified in 12-35-141
  - If using under indirect or telehealth supervision, have a written collaborative agreement with supervising dentist
    - Visit [www.codha.org/legal](http://www.codha.org/legal) for examples of collaborative agreement

> Supervision required
- **Direct**
- **Indirect**
- **Telehealth**

Resources

- Dr. Jeanette Maclean DDS
  - [www.kidsandbraces.com](http://www.kidsandbraces.com)
  - Anterior application of SDF - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zxlvbhUx3QE&t=47s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zxlvbhUx3QE&t=47s)
  - Dentaltown Webinars
    - More videos - [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCuJ6qgHP6JxaIqmSe3HSLmQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCuJ6qgHP6JxaIqmSe3HSLmQ)

- UCSF Protocol for Caries Arrest Using Silver Diamine Fluoride: Rationale, Indications, and Consent
  - [https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4778976/](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4778976/)

- Research

- Sample Consents and Collaborative Agreements
  - [www.codha.org/legal](http://www.codha.org/legal)

- Tray Set Up and Procedure (video)
  - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SLJTfniWtE4&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SLJTfniWtE4&feature=youtu.be)
Resources (cont.)

- ADA/IVAN
  - "Controlling Caries in Exposed Root Surfaces With Silver Diamine Fluoride: A Systematic Review With Meta-analysis".
  - JADA, August 2018.
  - https://jada.ada.org/article/S0002-8177(18)30232-0/fulltext

- "Systematic Review of SDF Efficacy and Applications in Older Adults"
  - https://www.ada.org/~/media/ADA/Public%20Programs/Files/MPRG_Systematic_Review_of_SDF_Effectiveness_and_Application_in_Older_Adults.pdf?la=en


- Sample Consents and Collaborative Agreements
  - www.codha.org/legal

- Tray Set Up and Procedure (video)
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SLJTfniWtE4&feature=youtu.be

- ADA Articles
  - "Controlling Caries in Exposed Root Surfaces With Silver Diamine Fluoride: A Systematic Review With Meta-analysis".
  - JADA, August 2018.
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