

Reframing Technical Language

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Technical Language	Language Reframe	Strategy
Caries	Decay	Use a familiar everyday word ("decay") instead of clinical terms; compare to "rotting or softening spots in teeth."
Deciduous Teeth	Baby Teeth	Use the term parents already use; avoid Latin/medical wording.
Biofilm	Bacteria layer on teeth	Use plain language and explain it's "the sticky film of germs that causes cavities."
Restoration	Filling	Describe the purpose ("filling a hole caused by decay") instead of the technical procedure name.
Dental Prophylaxis	Teeth Cleaning	Name the action ("cleaning") rather than the clinical code.
Enamel demineralization	Early weakening/softening of enamel	Explain the process simply—"outer tooth layer starting to weaken."
Remineralization	Repair/re-hardening of teeth	Describe process as "healing/strengthening enamel again" rather than chemistry.
Incipient lesion	Early cavity starting	Use the idea of a "tiny starting cavity" to make it tangible.
Pit-and-fissure sealant	Protective coating on back teeth	Describe function ("seal tiny grooves so food doesn't get trapped").
Prophylaxis	Routine dental cleaning	Swap to a familiar service name ("regular cleaning").

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Periodontal disease	Gum disease	Use a term patients know ("gum disease") and explain that it affects the gums and bone.
Dental fluorosis (very mild)	Faint white marks on teeth	Describe appearance ("small white flecks") and reassure about harmlessness.
Consumer Confidence Report (CCR)	Annual water-quality report	Use plain language and explain that it comes from your water utility.
Statistically significant	Unlikely due to chance	Translate statistics into everyday certainty: "strong enough that experts are confident it's real, not random."
Overfeed event	Too much fluoride accidentally added	Use clear cause-and-effect language: "adding too much by mistake," and note that safety systems catch this quickly.
Underfeed event	Too little fluoride added	Use clear cause-and-effect language: "not enough fluoride going in," and note this means less protection.
Fluoride enhances tooth remineralization by accelerating the growth of fluorapatite crystals on the partially demineralized subsurface crystals in the carious lesion. Fluoride adsorbs into this surface and attracts calcium ions.	Fluoride is a mineral that helps make teeth stronger and more resistant to decay. OR Fluoride acts as a shield for your teeth.	Shorten long scientific sentences: explain what it does (strengthens enamel) and why that matters (prevents decay).