

Crowns

Although the outside of each tooth is made of strong and hard enamel, teeth can be chipped, broken, or weakened due to:

- Trauma (such as fall)
- Tooth decay
- Large fillings
- Root canal treatment
- Age-related wear and tear.



An artificial crown is often the best way to save a tooth and strengthen it. The crown fits over the prepared existing tooth, replacing the natural crown and strengthening it by holding it together.

Crowns can be made from a number of materials including porcelain, zirconia, gold alloy or a combination of porcelain and metal. The colour of the porcelain and zirconia can be matched to the colour of your surrounding teeth.

THE PROCEDURE

Once the tooth is ready to be crowned, at least two appointments are needed for preparation and fitting of a crown. Sometimes a tooth will need root canal treatment, a foundation filling or post to be placed before the crown is started.

VISIT ONE

On your first visit, the dentist takes an impression of how your tooth looks before preparation so we can make your temporary crown. A small tray is filled with a soft, gel-like material, pushed onto your teeth, and held in place to set for two to four minutes.

After the area is numbed with a local anesthetic, the tooth structure is reduced around the edge and top of the tooth by 1-2 mm. This will allow the permanent crown to fit flush with your natural tooth. After the tooth is prepared, a 3D scan is taken of the area, and this scan is then sent to the dental technician who fabricates the crown.

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To protect the prepared tooth, a temporary crown is attached to the reshaped tooth with temporary cement. A temporary crown is not as strong as the final crown, so you should avoid chewing on that tooth as much as possible, avoid sticky or hard foods and pulling the floss up from under the temporary crown to reduce the risk of it dislodging. After your first appointment, the gum around the tooth may be tender due to the work performed in the area. This is very normal and should settle down within a day or two with regular, gentle cleaning. If you have any questions following your first appointment, please contact the clinic and one of our friendly staff members will be happy to help.

VISIT 2

At the second appointment, the temporary crown is removed and the permanent crown is placed over the prepared tooth. If we are satisfied with the fit and look of the crown, we cement the new crown in using a permanent dental cement. This cement is cured at the appointment but does not reach full strength until around 24 hours after your appointment. During this time, we ask you to take care with your new crown, particularly avoiding anything too hard or sticky. Once again, your gum may be tender as it adjusts to the new crown. This should settle down within a few days with your regular cleaning.

Your new crown is made from very strong material. If the crown is ceramic, although stronger than your natural tooth, it can still be damaged, so you still need to take care to avoid biting into a fork or a bone. Anything that could fracture your natural tooth could fracture the crown.

After fitting, the crown should feel comfortable and natural in your mouth. When checking the fit of the crown with your other teeth, the dentist relies partly on what you say about the feel of your bite, so mention any uncomfortable or strange sensations. It is normal for minor adjustments to be needed to achieve comfort.

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COMPLICATIONS

As with any dental or medical treatment, crown procedures have risks, despite the highest standards of practice. The following possible complications are listed to inform, but not to alarm you. There may be others that are not listed.

TOOTH BREAKAGE

When we assess your tooth prior to starting a crown, your dentist knows whether its structure is strong enough to take a crown. If there is doubt, the existing filling may be replaced, or the structure reinforced before we start shaping the tooth. Problems that occur during preparation can be corrected at that time, before taking the final impression.

INFECTION OF THE PULP OR GUMS

Infection may affect the teeth in two places:

- In the soft tissue inside the tooth, called the pulp.
- In the gums around the base of the teeth.

Whenever enamel is removed, or if the tooth was cracked or deeply filled, there is a risk that the underlying pulp may die and become infected. We crown teeth to try and avoid this but if it is not done in time, the tooth may need root canal treatment. To avoid gum infection, additional steps may be needed in your dental hygiene routine. Poor cleaning may cause “gum recession”, where the gum shrinks away from the neck of the tooth.

PAIN OR DISCOMFORT

During treatment of a tooth, surrounding gum may be injured and feel tender as the effects of local anaesthesia wear off. Any pain should not last beyond two days. If pain persists, contact your dentist.

ALTERED FEELING

If the size of a tooth is changes even slightly, it can influence the way it feels in the mouth, especially when chewing or biting or when the jaws are closed. It is important that you advise your dentist of any uncomfortable or odd feelings at the time of fitting the crown. If any discomfort continues beyond a few days, inform your dentist, as extra adjustments may be needed.

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LOOSE CROWN

A correctly fitted crown should be secure. A crown may be dislodged by a strong force. If this happens, the crown and tooth structure will be reassessed. If in good condition, the crown can be cleaned, disinfected and recemented in place. Contact your dentist if the crown has any movement, breakage, or other problem.

ALLERGIC REACTION

Allergic reactions to alloy or porcelain are rare, if you suspect an allergic reaction, contact your dentist.

AT HOME CARE

Crowns should last for many years, however there is no lifetime guarantee. How long they last is also dependant on good dental hygiene, oral health, and the forces you apply to your teeth. They still need to be flossed and brushed as well as your natural teeth to avoid the tooth decaying under the crown or gum issues developing around them. Regular preventative care appointments are also recommended to increase the lifespan of our teeth and crowns.

At your fitting appointment your dentist will show you how to clean your crowns properly and thoroughly.

OUR NEW CROWN PROMISE

At DNTL Code we want our patients to be assured that we believe in the quality of our work. That is why we have a 2 year new crown promise. If your crown or bridge breaks within 2 years of cementation, we will replace it free of charge*.

*To keep our new crown promise, you are required to attend your regular 6 monthly preventative care appointments to check for any defects. The warranty will only cover for the free replacement of the same crown restoration if it failed due to mechanical failures only, such as fractures or de-bonds. The warranty, however, does not cover if there is failure due to a trauma/accident, dental decays, gum diseases or a need for root canal therapy.