



Congratulations on your new filling!

We are proud to be your partner in maintaining optimal oral health. Your restoration will add to the lifespan of your tooth, protect your tooth, and in the case of a cosmetic restoration, add to the beauty and function of your dentition.

After your new filling is placed, you should be aware:

1. If you were anesthetized, the numbness will last approximately 2 – 4 hours (occasionally even longer). Please call if you are numb tomorrow.
2. Be careful to avoid biting your lip, tongue, or cheek while numb. Also, avoid any hot beverages or hot foods while numb.
3. DO NOT clench your teeth while they are numb - this could make your teeth very sore after the numbness wears off.
4. We have carefully adjusted the biting surfaces of your teeth so that they meet evenly when you bite down, though your bite may feel a little different until the teeth settle to their normal position.
5. Stay on soft foods or liquids and moderate temperatures today.
6. The tooth is recovering from the procedure, your bite is settling, and the filling is continuing to harden and bond to the tooth. Avoid chewing on that side for the rest of the day.
7. It is common to experience soreness in the jaw around the site of the injection. If this doesn't go away within 3 – 4 days, or if you notice any swelling in the gums, please let us know.
8. If you have sensitivity to hot or cold, it is usually temporary and should go away within a couple of weeks.
9. If you experience a sensation that your teeth are not coming together properly or feel "high" or "uneven," please call us for a simple adjustment.
10. Advil, Motrin, or Aleve is the recommended medication for any of these symptoms (for patients not allergic to these products).
11. Brush and floss normally.
12. Tomorrow you can begin normal chewing on the teeth we have restored. Pay careful attention to how the teeth meet when you chew. If it does not feel like your teeth are meeting normally, or if you begin to have some pain when chewing, call the office right away.

Hard Foods to Specifically Avoid:

Hard raw fruits and vegetables (apples, corn on the cob, carrots), hard rolls, tough meats (steak, ribs, Italian beef, beef jerky), bones and fruit pits, hard chips (tortilla, Krunchers), popcorn, hard and chewy candies (taffy, caramel, jawbreakers), gum, pizza (unless cut up), granola bars, nuts, seeds, and ice.

Fillings will not "adjust themselves," and if you continue to chew on a filling that does not fit your bite, you will make the teeth very sore. They may become so sore that they take several months to feel comfortable, and in extreme cases you could permanently damage the nerve of the tooth (requiring root canal therapy), fracture the tooth, or damage the new filling. It becomes more difficult to make the tooth comfortable if you wait several days.

POSSIBLE NEED FOR ROOT CANAL THERAPY

Any filling, no matter the size or depth, may result in the need for a root canal. The symptoms include:

- Hot sensitivity that lasts longer than a few weeks
- Hot sensitivity that begins after the tooth has been asymptomatic or problem free for a period of time
- Spontaneous pain that occurs anytime during the day or night
- Swelling, either in the mouth or on the face
- Cold sensitivity that lingers on for many minutes. Sharp, instantaneous reaction to cold is probably normal.

It is important that we know if you experience any of these symptoms, even if we decide to monitor them.

TOOTH BREAKAGE

Any time a filling is placed the remaining tooth is weaker. The chewing forces, however, remain the same. This can lead to a fracture or breakage of the tooth, which sometimes can be restored with a crown (cap). If the fracture is very deep, even a crown may not restore the tooth to comfortable function.

Please call if you have any questions or confusion about your instructions.