

Information About Crowns, Onlays, and Bridges

A crown ("cap") or onlay is usually placed because the remaining tooth structure is not capable of adequately supporting or retaining a regular filling. In addition, a crown will help hold together and support the remaining tooth structure, thus minimizing the chance that a tooth could fracture.

A crown will not eliminate the possibility of decay. Though the crown itself will not decay, the tooth could decay along the edges of the crown if not properly maintained.

A crown usually involves two visits after decay and old filling are removed and a core is placed.

* The first visit (less than 1 hour) involves preparation (shaping) of the tooth to make room for the crown, an impression (mold) for the lab to fabricate the crown on, and placement of an acrylic temporary to keep the tooth and gums in place.

* The second visit (30 min.) is needed to fit and cement the crown after we get it back from the lab (usually 3 wks.) Our receptionist will call you when we have the crown. Please call us if you do not hear anything within 4 weeks.

After a temporary crown is placed, **it is very important that the temporary crown stays on the tooth. This is not just for your comfort. If the temporary comes off, the prepared tooth could move and we would have to re-prepare the tooth and get a new impression. If it should come off, you must notify our office immediately.** We will give you a list of foods to avoid in order to keep the temporary in place. It is best if you avoid chewing on the temporary. Remember to pull the floss through the side when flossing around a temporary crown.

Occasionally a tooth will become sensitive after placement of a crown. Usually this will go away. Sometimes a tooth may need root canal therapy after a crown is placed (though usually not due to the crown placement). Root canal treatment can usually be done through the top of the crown without damaging the crown.

Is there any guarantee?

Crowns are subject to a lot of factors. However, it is my policy that if you keep up your regular check-ups (at least every 6 months) and your crown needs to be replaced within the first five years, I will replace it at no charge. This does not apply to porcelain crowns on second molars.

After Placement:

* Many crowns fit below the gum line. Therefore, you may experience some discomfort for a few days due to irritation. Sensitivity to cold and pressure is also possible.

* After the final cementation of your fixed restoration, it may take a few days to get used to the new crown or bridge. If you feel the bite is not correctly balanced, be sure to call immediately for an appointment for a simple adjustment. This will help to avoid making the tooth sore.

* **Proper brushing, flossing, and regular check-ups are recommended** to help retain your final restoration. The only area that a crowned tooth can decay is at the edge of the crown where it meets the tooth.

Please call the office if you have not received a call that your crown is in within three weeks.