



## Crowns & bridges

This information sheet is made to help you understand what crowns and bridges are, what the procedure involves and how they may benefit you, and the risks involved. For more information please ask any member of the Smileworks team.

### **Why have crowns or bridges?**

Teeth that are chipped, fractured or damaged can be restored with strong, long lasting dental crowns or bridges.

### **What is a crown?**

Crowns are an ideal restoration for teeth, which have been broken, or have been weakened by decay or by placing a very large filling. Root treated teeth may require a crown to protect the remaining tooth. Crowns can also be used to improve the appearance of teeth.

### **What are crowns made of?**

Crowns are made of a variety of materials and new materials are constantly introduced to the market. Different materials are used for different procedures.

**Porcelain bonded to precious metal crown** - is made of a precious metal base and porcelain is then applied in layers over the base.

**Porcelain crowns** - these crowns are not as strong as the bonded crowns but they can look very natural and are mostly used on front teeth and on people that do not grind their teeth.

**Composite crowns** - these crowns are made of a resin material and can look very natural. They are not as strong as bonded crowns and are used as a "long term" intermediate solution for full mouth reconstruction cases.

These crowns help the patient to get used to repositioning of the bite.

**Precious metal crowns** - Gold and palladium crowns are very strong and hard wearing and are usually used at the back of the mouth. They are less visible there and most suitable for people who grind and clench their teeth.

### **How are crowns made?**

The tooth will be prepared to the ideal shape of the crown. This will involve removing most of the outer surface of the tooth leaving a stump. The thickness of the crown will be the same as the amount of tooth that has been taken away.

Once the tooth is shaped an impression of the prepared tooth will be taken and one of the opposite jaw and another to mark the way you bite. All the impressions will be sent to the technician to reproduce a crown that fits the tooth. We select an appropriate colour with you so that it matches your own teeth. Sometimes we ask the lab technician to attend in order to match the colour perfectly. The prepared tooth will have a temporary crown fitted until the new crown is ready.

The treatment takes at least two visits to the surgery.

### **How long will a crown last?**

You can expect a new crown to last 5-15 years. With regular dental health checkups and good hygiene your crown may last longer.

## How are bridges made?

A bridge is made by constructing crowns on the teeth on either side of the space, and joining these two crowns together by placing a false tooth in the space. The procedure is the same as the crown procedure. The end result is very aesthetic and functional. Bridges are a less costly tooth replacement option than implants for missing teeth.

## Dental Crown Benefits

Dental crowns can benefit you in a variety of ways, including:

- Repair to your damaged tooth
- Replacement of a missing tooth in conjunction with a [dental implant](#)
- Improved ability to drink and chew
- Protecting the tooth from further damage
- Enhanced appearance of your smile
- Decreased wear on other teeth
- Durability, depending on how well you look after them
- Our dental crowns, made of the highest quality porcelain, are designed to blend seamlessly with your smile for a natural look.

## Risks of crowns

Choosing a highly-skilled dentist to perform the procedure is one way to minimise your risks. Even with the best treatment, however, complications occasionally occur. When your doctor is preparing your tooth for the crown, the tooth will be reshaped, and some healthy tissue will need to be removed. This can cause sensitivity, and sometimes can cause the nerve of the tooth to die, leading to the need for root canal treatment or extraction. Dental crowns that are not properly placed can cause bite misalignment or exacerbate jaw problems. In addition, if you do not care for your crown properly, you can experience the typical effects of tooth decay.

The risks will be fully explored with you prior to treatment.

## Are you a candidate for Crowns and Bridges?

If you are interested in crowns and bridges, our dentists will evaluate your medical history, current dental health, and the condition of your tooth enamel to determine if you are a good candidate. You should:

- Be in good oral and overall health, brush, floss and clean between your teeth every day
- Be committed to proper oral hygiene
- Understand that the procedure requires permanent alteration of the tooth
- Attend regularly for your check up and hygiene appointments

With proper care, crowns can last many years and preserve compromised teeth.

