Common Procedures

Crowns

Also known as: Dental cap • Indirect restoration

Put a crown on it

A crown is a tooth-shaped cap that is placed over — or in place of — a tooth to restore its shape, size and strength.

Did you know?

Crowns can last a lifetime. Take care of your crown by brushing and flossing carefully and not chewing on hard items, like pencils, ice and popcorn kernels.

You may need a crown if...

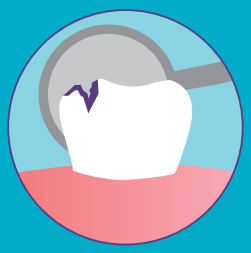
- **Your tooth is weak, broken or has a large piece missing.** Crowns can strengthen teeth after accidents, large fillings or root canal treatment.
- **You have a misshaped or discolored tooth.** Crowns can improve your smile.
- **You need a bridge.** Missing one or more teeth? A fixed appliance called a bridge can fill the gap. A crown on either side holds the bridge in place.
- **You have a dental implant.** Implants can also replace missing teeth. The crown is the tooth-like structure that sits at the top of the metal implant.

What is a crown made of?

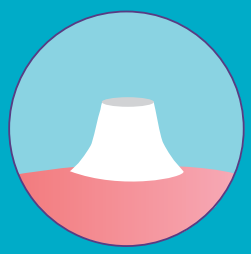


Here are some of the metals crowns can be made of.

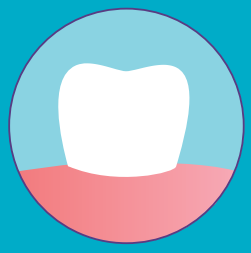
- **Porcelain fused to metal**
- **Ceramic**
- **Resin composite**
- **Stainless steel**
- **Gold**











How is a crown placed?

Placing a crown is a process that usually takes two visits to the dentist.

First visit

1. **Examining your tooth:** Your dentist will examine the tooth to see if it can support a crown. (If not, the dentist may first need to add a post and core.) For a tooth-colored crown, the dentist will use a shade guide to record the natural color of your teeth to make sure that the crown matches.
2. **Creating a first impression:** You will bite down on a tray filled with gel to create an impression of your mouth.
3. **Preparing the tooth:** After the area is numbed with a local anesthetic, your dentist will file down the tooth to reshape it. Any decay will be removed.
4. **Creating the final impression:** Once your tooth is shaped, the dentist will take another impression. It will be sent to a laboratory to create a crown customized for your mouth.
5. **Placing a temporary crown:** The dentist will fit you with a temporary crown, glued onto your tooth with temporary cement. The temporary crown protects your tooth and keeps it from moving. The cement also contains an ingredient to reduce sensitivity.

Second visit

6. **Placing the crown:** The tooth and nearby gums will be numbed with a local anesthetic, and the tooth will be carefully cleaned. The dentist will remove the temporary crown and cement and make sure the permanent crown has the right color and fit. Then, he or she will dry the area and use dental cement to attach the crown to your tooth. Some types of cement may require a blue light to harden.

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