



# Dental Crowns

## Restoring and Protecting Damaged Teeth

### What Is a Dental Crown?

A **dental crown** is a custom-made restoration that completely covers the visible portion of a damaged tooth above the gumline. Crowns are designed to restore the tooth's strength, shape, size, and appearance while protecting it from further damage.

Crowns are commonly recommended when a tooth is too weak or extensively damaged to be restored with a filling alone.

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## Why Might You Need a Dental Crown?

Your dentist may recommend a crown for several reasons.

### After Root Canal Treatment

Teeth that have received root canal treatment are often weaker because much of their internal structure has been removed.

A crown helps protect the tooth from fracture and restores normal chewing function.

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### Large Cavities

If too much of a tooth has been lost because of decay, a filling may not provide enough support.

A crown can restore the remaining tooth and improve its long-term durability.

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### Cracked Teeth

Certain cracks weaken the tooth and increase the risk of further fracture.

A crown may help hold the remaining tooth structure together and reduce the risk of additional damage.

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## **Broken or Worn Teeth**

Crowns can restore teeth that have been:

- Fractured
- Severely worn from grinding
- Damaged by trauma

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## **Cosmetic Improvement**

Crowns may also improve the appearance of teeth that are:

- Severely discolored
- Misshapen
- Poorly restored

The most appropriate treatment depends on each patient's individual needs.

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# **What Materials Are Used?**

Several materials are available.

Your dentist will recommend the best option based on the location of the tooth, appearance, and functional needs.

## **All-Ceramic Crowns**

These crowns provide excellent esthetics and closely resemble natural teeth.

They are commonly used for front teeth but may also be appropriate for many back teeth.

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## **Porcelain-Fused-to-Metal Crowns**

These crowns combine a metal framework with a porcelain outer layer.

They provide strength while maintaining a natural appearance.

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## **Zirconia Crowns**

Zirconia is a strong ceramic material that combines durability with excellent esthetics.

It has become one of the most commonly used crown materials.

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## **Metal Crowns**

Gold and other metal alloys are highly durable and resistant to wear.

Although less common today because of cosmetic preferences, they may still be appropriate for certain back teeth.

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# **How Is a Crown Placed?**

Although every situation is different, treatment usually involves two appointments.

## **First Appointment**

Your dentist will:

- Examine the tooth
- Remove damaged or decayed tissue
- Shape the tooth
- Take an impression or digital scan
- Place a temporary crown if needed

The permanent crown is then fabricated in a dental laboratory or, in some offices, produced using same-day technology.

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## **Second Appointment**

The temporary crown is removed.

Your dentist checks:

- Fit

- Bite
- Appearance

The permanent crown is then securely cemented into place.

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## Can Some Crowns Be Completed in One Visit?

Yes.

Some dental offices use **CAD/CAM technology** to design and manufacture certain ceramic crowns during a single appointment.

Not every tooth or clinical situation is suitable for same-day crowns.

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## How Long Do Crowns Last?

The lifespan of a crown depends on:

- Oral hygiene
- Biting forces
- Teeth grinding
- Diet
- Material used
- Regular dental care

Many crowns remain functional for **10–15 years or longer**, although individual results vary.

Routine dental examinations help monitor the condition of crowns over time.

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## Caring for a Dental Crown

A crown still requires daily care.

To help it last:

- Brush twice daily with fluoride toothpaste.
- Clean between your teeth every day.
- Avoid chewing ice or very hard objects.
- Wear a night guard if you grind your teeth.
- Visit your dentist regularly.

The tooth beneath the crown can still develop decay if plaque accumulates around the edges.

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## Can a Crown Get a Cavity?

The crown itself cannot develop a cavity.

However, the **natural tooth underneath** can still develop decay, particularly around the margin where the crown meets the tooth.

Good oral hygiene remains essential.

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## Common Myths

**"A crown lasts forever."**

**False.**

Although crowns are durable, they may eventually require repair or replacement.

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**"Once I have a crown, I don't need to brush that tooth."**

**False.**

The natural tooth beneath the crown still requires daily brushing and cleaning between the teeth.

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**"Crowns are only cosmetic."**

**False.**

Most crowns are placed to restore strength and protect damaged teeth.

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## Key Takeaways

- ✓ Dental crowns restore and protect teeth that are too damaged for fillings alone.
  - ✓ Crowns are commonly recommended after root canal treatment, large cavities, and fractures.
  - ✓ Several durable materials are available, including ceramic and zirconia.
  - ✓ Good oral hygiene helps crowns last longer.
  - ✓ Regular dental examinations help monitor the health of crowned teeth.
  - ✓ Preserving natural teeth whenever possible remains an important goal of modern dentistry.
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## References

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