

# A crown is a cover or “cap” your dentist can put over a tooth.

The crown restores the tooth to its normal shape, size, and function. A crown can make the tooth stronger or improve the way it looks.

Reasons you may need a crown:

- You have a cavity that is too large for a filling
- You have a tooth that is cracked, worn down, or otherwise weakened
- You have had root canal treatment — the crown will protect the restored tooth
- You want to cover a discolored or badly shaped tooth and improve your smile

## In this brochure:

- What is a crown and why you may need one
- How a crown is placed
- Tips for caring for your crown

## ADA Healthy Smile Tips

- Brush your teeth twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste.
- Clean between your teeth daily.
- Eat a healthy diet that limits sugary beverages and snacks.
- See your dentist regularly for prevention and treatment of oral disease.

For more information about taking care of your mouth and teeth, visit [MouthHealthy.org](http://MouthHealthy.org), the ADA’s website just for patients.



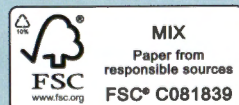
*Produced in cooperation with the American College of Prosthodontists*

*“Crown Used to Replace a Filling” photos courtesy of John R. Nosti, DMD, FAGD, FACE, [www.cosmeticdentistryofsj.com](http://www.cosmeticdentistryofsj.com).*

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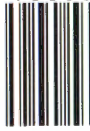
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Dental Treatment

# Why Do I Need a Crown?



**ADA** American Dental Association®  
America's leading advocate for oral health

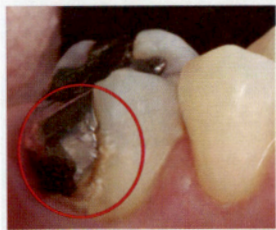
## What is your crown made from?

Crowns are made from several types of materials. Metal alloys, ceramics, porcelain, porcelain fused to metal, or composite resin may be used. When a crown is made, the material often is colored to blend in with your natural teeth.

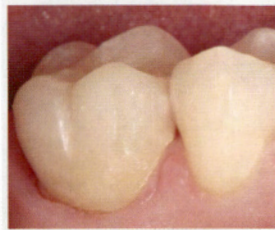
Your dentist wants your crown to look natural and fit comfortably in your mouth. To decide which material to use for your crown, your dentist will consider many factors, such as:

- the tooth's location and function
- the position of the gum tissue
- your preference
- the amount of tooth that shows when you smile
- the color or shade of the tooth

## Replacing a filling with a crown



**Before** – Amalgam filling with decay at the edge



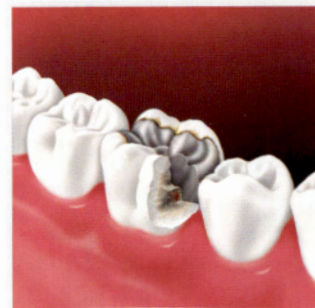
**After** – Filling replaced by a crown

## Steps of placing a crown

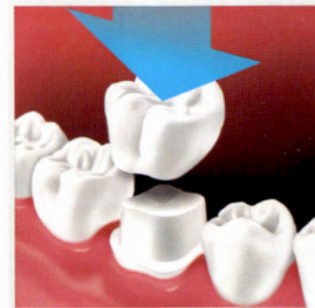
It usually takes 2 dental visits to complete the treatment. When a crown is placed over a natural tooth, several steps are involved:

1. **Your dentist prepares the tooth** by removing its outer portion so the crown will fit. Any decay is also removed. If additional tooth structure is needed to support the crown, your dentist may build up the core of the tooth.
2. **An impression is made** to provide an exact model for the crown. The impression can be made from a mold or by digitally scanning the tooth.
3. **You may get a temporary crown** while you wait for the permanent crown to be ready. This usually takes less than 2 weeks. While you have a temporary crown, the tooth may be sensitive to hot and cold. Avoid chewing gum and eating sticky foods during this time. If your dentist has special equipment, then you may be able to get your new crown on the same day.
4. When the new crown is ready, **your dentist places it in your mouth and makes the necessary adjustments**. When you and your dentist are happy with how it looks and feels, the crown is cemented into place.

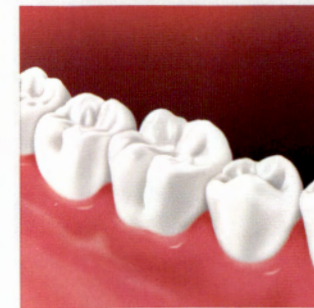
## Crown placement



**Before crown:** Worn filling with decay under filling



Crown is placed over prepared tooth



After crown placement

## Caring for your teeth

Like natural teeth, crowns can break. And, the tooth under the crown can still get cavities. To prevent cavities or damage to your crown:

- Brush your teeth twice a day and clean between your teeth every day. Look for oral care products that have the **American Dental Association's Seal of Acceptance**, which tells you that they meet ADA standards for safety and effectiveness.
- Avoid chewing hard foods, ice, or other hard objects, such as pencils, especially if you have tooth-colored crowns.
- Be sure to see your dentist for regular exams and professional teeth cleanings.

