

cosmetic dentistry

Crowns

Crowns (or caps) are hand-made coverings designed to restore teeth if they are misshapen, discoloured, or have been weakened in some way. A crown will give strength and has the shape and colour of a natural tooth.

Crowns are made from a variety of materials, the most common being porcelain bonded to gold. Each crown is hand-crafted by a dental technician to match your natural teeth. Crowns normally require two visits to the dentist. The first to prepare the tooth, take impressions, record the shade of your teeth and fit a temporary crown (usually made of plastic). The second visit to fit the permanent crown. You will normally have to wait just a week or two between these appointments.

Porcelain inlays

An inlay is a filling made in the dental laboratory. The dentist prepares your tooth and takes an impression; following this a temporary filling is put into the tooth for a week or so. An inlay constructed from porcelain is strong and very natural looking. Inlays last longer than white fillings and are recommended for larger cavities where fillings would not be strong enough.

Bridges

A bridge is used to replace one or several missing teeth. It is usually constructed by fitting crowns (caps) to the teeth on either side of the gap, thereby bridging it.

They are made from various materials depending on the clinical diagnosis and your preferences; the most common being precious metal for the base with layers of porcelain bonded to the visible areas. Once the bridge is fitted it blends in with the natural teeth.

A bridge might be recommended if you have lost one or more teeth. Like crowns, bridges are hand crafted to give the most lifelike and natural appearance.

Implants

An implant is an artificial whole tooth; it consists of a root and a natural looking replacement tooth. The root is made of titanium, which is placed within the gum to form a secure foundation. The replacement tooth is made of porcelain, or a special plastic (sometimes on a metal base) and it is fitted on top of the titanium root.

Implants are usually the best solution for replacing missing teeth or teeth needing extraction. The success rate for implants can be as high as 95% for 10 to 20 years.

Cosmetic dentures

Dentures have come a long way since the simple plastic ones were first invented. If you have full dentures you could benefit from an implant stabilisation bar, which holds the denture quite firmly in place. There are high quality teeth for a very natural look and new techniques to make your dentures fit and work more comfortably and efficiently.

Cosmetic contouring

Tooth reshaping, or contouring, is one of few instant treatments now available in cosmetic dentistry. Dental contouring can even be a substitute for braces under certain circumstances. It is a procedure of subtle changes, utilising gentle abrasives and lamination. A few millimetres of reduction or expansion can create a beautiful smile when performed by a cosmetic dentist, usually without the need for an anaesthetic.



INFORMATION
FOR PATIENTS

Combining art and science
for a beautiful smile

cosmetic dentistry

enhance your image

feel more confident



What is cosmetic dentistry?

Cosmetic dentistry includes all treatments that are undertaken to improve the appearance of your teeth. Almost everyone can have a more even, beautiful smile from cosmetic dental treatments. These treatments include veneers, crowns, bridges and tooth-coloured fillings. Modern techniques can dramatically improve the shape, position or colour of your teeth. Whether you have missing teeth, gaps, chipped or discoloured teeth, cosmetic dentistry can transform your look and improve confidence. The dentist can advise you on the most effective techniques, here is a list of the more popular ones:

- Tooth whitening
- Air polishing
- Orthodontic treatment for adults
- Natural colour fillings
- Veneers
- Crowns
- Porcelain inlays
- Bridges
- Implants
- Cosmetic dentures
- Cosmetic contouring

Tooth whitening

Tooth whitening is a procedure for lightening the colour of teeth. Two mild preparations are used for whitening: either hydrogen peroxide or carbamide peroxide. These are applied in the treatment room where they can be activated by heat or light, or at home in a custom-made 'tray', a transparent plastic device which is designed to hold the preparation in place on the teeth. Different strengths of preparation are prescribed for different types of use.

Whitening is generally recommended if your teeth are naturally discoloured due to ageing, are stained or discoloured as a result of consumption of certain foods and drinks such as curries, red wine and coffee.

Air polishing

Air polishing can be used to remove stains and surface discolouration from the teeth. It uses a pressurised stream of non-toxic aluminium oxide powder which rapidly removes the surface marks. Air polishing does not require a local anaesthetic.

Orthodontic treatment (braces)

Whilst orthodontic treatment has traditionally been associated with children, it is becoming widely popular with adults. Tooth alignment is practical and beneficial at any age. If your teeth are crossed over or if there are gaps between them, ask your dentist if you could benefit from orthodontic alignment. Treatment usually lasts for 12-18 months and there are new invisible and tooth-coloured braces.



Natural coloured fillings

Many people have what are known as 'amalgam' (silver) fillings, or in some cases gold fillings. Although these fillings are strong, they can be unsightly. Furthermore, amalgam tends to discolour your teeth over time. Tooth-coloured fillings, or 'white' fillings, are known as 'composite' fillings and are made from a putty-like resin-based material that can be moulded to the exact shape of the tooth and set using a blue light. These are lifelike and long lasting and are currently the most popular cosmetic dental procedure. They can have some limitations which your dentist can discuss with you: these involve their size and position in the mouth and their longevity. White fillings usually last 4-5 years whereas amalgam can last longer; up to 7 years.

Veneers

Veneers are thin coverings of either porcelain or composite. Porcelain veneers are made by a dental technician to exactly match an impression of your teeth. Once bonded to the tooth, a veneer becomes strong, natural looking and is long-lasting. Veneers usually need very little preparation and in some cases do not need an anaesthetic.

If you have gaps, especially between your front teeth, or chipped, cracked or discoloured teeth, veneers can dramatically improve your smile. Many models and film personalities have benefited from veneers.

Before



With porcelain veneers



Photos courtesy of Ivoclar Vivodent.