

# CROWNS

A crown is a “cap” for a damaged tooth. A crown usually covers the tooth completely, strengthening and protecting it. Your tooth may need a crown for many reasons: a large old filling, a fracture, dental decay, root canal treatment, or severe discoloring. A crown may also be used to cover a dental implant or attach a dental bridge.

There are several different types of crowns, made from different materials, including porcelain, metal, resin, and porcelain-fused-to-metal. Your dentist will explain the various options and make recommendations based on your needs.

Fitting a crown requires at least two visits to the dentist’s office. The dentist will first thoroughly clean the tooth and remove any decay. Then the tooth is filed down just enough so that the crown can fit over it. If part of your tooth is missing, your dentist will use filling material to build it up.

Then your dentist will make an impression to send to a dental laboratory where the crown will be manufactured. A temporary

crown (of acrylic or metal) will be put over the tooth to protect it for a few weeks until your permanent crown is ready. Make sure you understand and follow your dentist’s instructions for how to care for your temporary crown.

At your next visit, the temporary crown is removed and the permanent one placed and adjusted carefully. The dentist will evaluate its fit and color. If you both approve, then the new crown is permanently cemented into place.

Your dentist will match the crown color to the color of your teeth. If you are considering whitening your teeth, you should talk to your dentist about your options before the crown is made, because bleaching won’t whiten a crown.

A permanently crowned tooth will probably not require any special care, but the tooth underneath is still vulnerable to gum disease, so consult with your dentist about your oral healthcare practices.

