



Post-op Care Instructions: Fillings, Inlays, Onlays

Composite Resin Filling:

> This is a tooth-colored plastic and glass mixture used to restore decayed teeth. Following preparation, the dentist places the composite layers, typically using a light specialized to harden each layer. When the process is finished, the dentist will shape the composite to fit the tooth. The dentist then polishes the composite to prevent staining and early wear.

Amalgam filling:

> Dental amalgam is considered a safe, affordable and durable material that has been used to restore the teeth of more than 100 million Americans. It contains a mixture of metals such as silver, copper and tin, in addition to mercury, which binds these components into a hard, stable and safe substance. Dental amalgam has been studied and reviewed extensively, and has established a record of safety and effectiveness.

Hygiene Care:

> Keep your mouth clean. Brush gently around the teeth that had work done for the first few days.

Numbness:

> Anesthetic is usually used for dental fillings. Your lips or tongue may be numb for several hours after your appointment. It is recommended that you avoid chewing until the numbness has completely worn off to avoid injury.

Soreness:

> Your gums around the teeth that were treated will likely be very sore for about a week. This is normal and heals fastest if you keep the area clean with gentle brushing and rinse with warm salt water (approx. 1 tsp. salt per cup of water).

> Corners of the mouth can sometimes crack, requiring ointment. Sore throat and pain of swallowing are not uncommon and dissipate with time. Jaw soreness is also common and will usually go away with time.

> The injection site may be sore. Over-the-counter pain medications should handle any discomfort.

Sensitivity:

> Hot, cold, and pressure sensitivity is normal after your appointment. It usually takes 2 to 4 weeks after the filling is placed for these symptoms to resolve completely on their own.

What if:

> If you experience difficulty flossing between the treated teeth or find that the floss is constantly being shredded, call for an appointment to smooth the contacting tooth surfaces.

> If your teeth feel “dirty” to the tongue after placing the new filling, know this is common. This is usually excess bonding liquid that smears on the side of the tooth. It is transparent and may not have been sufficiently removed when the tooth was polished. This usually wears away on its own, but if it is irritating, let us know so we may remove it and re-polish the tooth.

> The bite was checked at the end of your appointment with a technique that finds the way your teeth meet. When your bite was checked, however, you were numb, laying on your back, and your mouth had been open for an extended period of time. This may have prevented your jaw from initially biting correctly when the bite was checked. This could lead to the bite being “off” with your new filling(s). This is the most common cause of lingering discomfort after fillings. If sensitivity to temperature, pressure, chewing, or any unexplained sensitivity persists, or gets worse, call our office immediately for an appointment. The bite likely needs a slight adjustment.