

THE HARLEY STREET ORAL
RECONSTRUCTION CENTRE

What's the best way to care for crowns, bridges and other restorative work such as fillings?

After crowns or bridges have been fitted in your mouth there are a few things to expect and to care for. Most of this advice also pertains to large fillings. Initially you may experience some sensitivity to cold as the tooth may be slightly irritated by the restorative materials. This sensitivity should gradually subside after a few days. If that does not happen or the bite seems off or it just doesn't feel normal, please call our office for a slight adjustment.

It is extremely important to maintain excellent oral hygiene with your crowns, bridges or fillings. Some people have the misconception that a crowned tooth no longer needs to be maintained. Crowns and bridges are still susceptible to decay near the gum-line the same as a natural tooth and those margins are actually a weak point which can break down over time. Therefore, this margin area requires special care. In order to ensure proper hygiene please try to follow the advice below:

- **Brush and clean your teeth after eating.** It is important that food remnants and plaque are thoroughly cleaned from all surfaces in order to minimize bacterial biofilm build-up which can lead to decay or gum inflammation. Normal brushing with a fluoride toothpaste and flossing is a must. Especially when it comes to crowns or bridges supported by teeth or dental implants it is also imperative to use some form of super floss or interdental brushes to ensure adequate cleaning as seen below. Our hygienists and dentists will be happy to demonstrate correct use of these cleaning aids.



- **Please use additional chemical means if you have a high caries risk.** Additional use of a fluoride rinse (for example Colgate Fluorigard), and use of a high fluoride content toothpaste (for example Colgate Duraphat 2800 or 5000) are excellent for preventing additional tooth decay. These additional aids are extremely important for patients with a high decay rate. Your dentist will provide more information for the need of this extra protection.
- **Be mindful that your crowns and bridges can still fracture.** Most crowns and bridges have a ceramic outer layer or are all-ceramic. These materials are very strong and colour stable, however, they still have potential to fracture the same as a natural tooth. As a rule of thumb, don't do anything with a crown or bridge that could damage a natural tooth. If you have been asked to wear a protective bite guard at night please follow that advice in order to minimize the occurrence or mechanical complications due to excessive forces during clenching and/or grinding your teeth.
- **Schedule regular dental check-ups.** Your dentist will recommend how often to visit to have your oral health checked and your teeth cleaned. Doing this over regular intervals will significantly reduce the chance of major long-term complications. Patients who usually "skip" a number of aftercare appointments sometimes come in when it is too late to repair or salvage existing restorations.
- **See your dentist promptly if you feel that something does not feel right or has changed.** This can increase the chance of any issue being reversible and not causing significant maintenance burden.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have further questions.