

White Fillings

What are they?

A filling replaces part of a tooth that had been lost because of decay or through accidental damage.

You may hear the dentist talk about 'composite', 'glass ionomer' and 'compomer'. These are different types of white, tooth coloured filling material.

What will my dentist do?

Your dentist will:

- Usually numb the tooth and adjacent area with an injection, some small fillings may not need this.
- Removing any decay, together with any old filling material, and shape the cavity using a small, high-speed drill.
- Wash and dry the tooth by blowing water and then air onto it.
- Use one of a variety of means to isolate the tooth and keep it dry.
- Apply a special adhesive to the tooth, typically in two or three stages, and then placing the filling, again in stages.

- Harden the filling material between stages of the filling procedure, by the use of a bright light shone inside the mouth- this is called 'curing'.
- Trim the filling as necessary and then polish it, checking that you can bite together comfortably.

What are the benefits?

- A tooth needs less drilling for a white, tooth coloured filling than for a silver filling.
- Unlike silver fillings, white, tooth coloured filling materials, which come in different shades to match different coloured teeth, are glued in place, sealing the filling and helping to strengthen the remaining teeth. White, tooth coloured filling materials can be used in most situations, including filling of back teeth and makes front teeth look better.
- When used in back teeth, white, tooth coloured fillings look better than silver fillings, but take longer to place, partly because they are finished and polished in one visit. White, tooth coloured fillings may not wear as well as silver fillings but they do have the advantage that they can be repaired, rather than replaced, as and when something goes wrong.