

# Crowns



## What are they?

The crown of a tooth is that part which is visible in the mouth. An artificial crown completely covers a weak tooth above the gum line and protects it.

Crowns are made of metal or porcelain, or porcelain with metal inside for strength.

## What will my dentist do?

- He or she will shape the tooth so that, with the artificial crown, it will be the same size as a normal tooth.
- Preparation time will depend on how damaged the tooth is and whether it needs to be built up with a filling first.
- The tooth might have to be root-filled first – this is sometimes called 'removing the nerve'. The crown is sometimes held in place by a peg in the root canal if a lot of the tooth is missing.
- Your dentist will use a soft, mouldable material to make exact 'impressions' of the tooth that is to be crowned and the nearby

teeth. A dental technician uses the impressions to make the crown the exact height and size needed.

- A thin cord may be used to hold the gum away from the tooth so that the impression is accurate round the edges.
- A temporary crown made of plastic or metal is put over the tooth until the permanent crown is made. You can chew on a temporary crown but it won't be as strong as the finished one.
- When the crown is fitted, your dentist will make small adjustments to make sure you can bite comfortably. The crown is tried on first, and then glued into place.

## What are the benefits?

- A crown is strong and can look and feel exactly like a natural tooth. The colour and shape can be matched to your own teeth.
- Depending on the strength of the tooth underneath, a crown can last for many years if you look after your mouth and teeth and the crown is not accidentally damaged.
- Crowns can also improve the appearance of misshapen or discoloured teeth.