

Porcelain Crowns

What are porcelain crowns?

Porcelain crowns, otherwise known as 'caps', are used to treat damaged teeth. The decay is removed, and the porcelain crown fitted over the missing area of the tooth, which is shaped to receive the crown.

Who can benefit from having porcelain crowns?

Porcelain crowns may be used for several reasons. These include a decayed tooth that is too damaged for a filling, protection following root canal treatment, support to a cracked or broken tooth, aesthetic reasons and covering the effect of acid erosion to the tooth or teeth.

Procedure

Porcelain crowning is performed under a local anesthetic. Firstly, the tooth (or teeth) is cleaned, and any remaining decay will be removed. The tooth is then shaped using a special dental drill or file, and a mould of the tooth taken. The impression on the mould is then used to create the porcelain crown to fit onto the damaged tooth. The porcelain crown is usually fused to metal to make sure it is strong enough when you bite down. This process takes between 2-3 weeks. You may be fitted with a temporary crown while the porcelain crown is being created. When you return to have the permanent crown fitted, your tooth will be 'roughened' so that the dental cement used to fix the crown will bond well. The porcelain crown is then fitted and cemented into place.

Recovery period

As with a normal dental treatment, you will be able to leave the dentist following the porcelain crowning procedure. You may be slightly aware of the new crown in your mouth but this should pass after a few days. Your new porcelain crown should last for many years.

Risks

Your porcelain crown may feel slightly more sensitive and can sometimes be painful, and you should contact your dentist if this occurs. There is also a chance that the crown may loosen or fall out, in which case you will need to have it refitted.