

## Patient information

### Crowns Veneers and Bridges

#### Liverpool University Dental Hospital

Crowns are used to restore teeth which have been weakened by decay, have very large fillings, are worn or broken, or following root canal treatment. Crowns can also be used to improve the appearance of teeth.

A veneer is a thin layer of porcelain or composite made to fit over the front surface of a tooth, like a false fingernail fits over a nail. They are used to improve the shape, size, colour and sometimes position of teeth.

A bridge can be used to replace missing teeth in certain situations, but unlike a denture, it is fixed into the mouth.

#### **How long do they last?**

It is important to remember that crowns/bridges/veneers do not last a lifetime. It may be necessary to replace them several times in a lifetime. The average life span of crown and bridgework ranges from five to ten years. Some people may keep the same crown and bridgework for twenty or thirty years. The long-term prognosis is closely related to the care patients take of their restorations.

#### **Factors that influence how long crowns, veneers and bridges will last include:**

- The condition of the teeth before the crown, veneer or bridgework was placed e.g. very broken down teeth, teeth with very large fillings or root canal fillings in place, teeth with periodontal disease.
- Diet and oral hygiene.
- Cleaning with toothbrushes and in between teeth with dental floss or interdental brushes.
- Smoking.
- Daily wear and tear put upon their teeth – e.g. grinding teeth.

At the Dental Hospital your treatment will be under the responsibility of a named Consultant. Dentists in higher training and dental students are supervised whilst treatment is carried out.

## **Are there any risks to having crowns/veneers/bridges?**

When you have a crown, a bridge or a veneer, it might be necessary for the dentist to remove some of your tooth surface with a drill, to provide space for restoration to be placed. This may involve long appointments, and in some cases, several visits for tooth preparation and impressions before your crown, veneer or bridge is fitted.

**As with any dental or medical procedure, there are a few potential risks. These are listed below:**

- A percentage of teeth receiving crowns/veneers/bridges may require root canal therapy. Symptoms can arise months, or even years later, at which time the root canal can usually be performed by access through a small hole in the top of the crown or by removing the restoration.
- Patients with fragile gum types may experience gum recession exposing a darker root surface or the edge of the restoration. It is important to remember that good oral hygiene is essential.

The gum around your crowns is very sensitive to build up of plaque. It is very important that your oral hygiene is meticulous if you have any crowns/veneers/bridges. If your gums bleed it may indicate a build-up of plaque. This could be due to poor brushing technique, failure to clean under the bridge, failure to clean in between your teeth where a toothbrush can't reach. Your dental team will be able to give you advice.

## **Will my crowns/veneers/bridges look good?**

Where possible we will try and find the closest match of the material your crown is made of to your natural teeth and will try to make the size and shape blend with the rest of your teeth as closely as possible. Sometimes it is better to place a gold or other metal crown on a molar (back) tooth. You will be advised about the material used to crown your teeth. Where possible we will use tooth-coloured materials on visible surfaces.

Please remember that if you bleach your natural teeth, the porcelain on your crowns will not be affected by bleaching so your crowned teeth will not match your natural teeth.

## **What happens if my crowns/veneers/bridges need replacing?**

If your crowns/veneers/bridges were placed in the Dental Hospital, it does not necessarily mean that we will replace them in the future. Once your treatment is completed and you are discharged from the hospital, we would expect your General Dental Practitioner to provide any ongoing maintenance. The cost of any such maintenance is the patients' responsibility.

If you have any queries about the information contained within this leaflet or any other aspects about your treatment, please do not hesitate to discuss at your next appointment. If a further appointment is not scheduled, you may wish to contact us as below. Your general dentist would also be able to advise on these types of restorations.

Restorative Department,

First Floor Reception

Tel: 0151 706 5051

LUDH General Enquiries – 0151 706 5307 / 5309

Opening Hours - Monday to Friday, 9.00am to 5.00pm

## Feedback

Your feedback is important to us and helps us influence care in the future.

Following your discharge from hospital or attendance at your outpatient appointment you will receive a text asking if you would recommend our service to others. Please take the time to text back, you will not be charged for the text and can opt out at any point. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

## Further information

**Restorative Department**  
**First Floor Reception**  
**Tel: 0151 706 5051**

**Liverpool University Dental Hospital**  
**General enquiries**  
**Tel: 015 706 5307/5309**  
**Opening Hours Monday to Friday 9.00am to 5.00pm**

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