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Quality, Affordable, Compassionate Dental Care for You and Your Family

In dentistry today, there are several materials available to us to restore your teeth to optimum health. To aid you in deciding which alternative may be best for you, we have developed this list which provides some details about each material and technique.

Silver Amalgam - Amalgam has been used by dentists for over 150 years to restore teeth.

It is a mixture of silver, nickel, tin copper and zinc using mercury to mix these components together. Approximately 10 years ago, there was controversy that silver amalgam could expel mercury in your body at levels high enough to cause systematic diseases such as Multiple Sclerosis or Alzheimer's Disease. This has been proven to be not true by studies done at the National Institute of Health, the F.D.A. and the A.D.A. However, we do know that silver amalgam can and will chip and break teeth as the size of the filling increase. We also know that silver can stain teeth as it ages. The average life span of a silver amalgam is 12-14 years.

Composite - These "tooth-colored" plastic fillings have been used by dentists since the 1970's in different formulations. It is bonded into place and comes in shades to match your tooth color and therefore is more esthetic than silver amalgam, however these plastic fillings are of limited strength. The average longevity is 3 to 6 years before needing replacement. The fee for a composite is approximately 30% more than a comparable sized silver filling. Composite fillings on back teeth are reimbursed at a lower level and can result in greater out of pocket costs for you.

Crowns - A crown or "cap" is a restoration that covers the entire tooth to support it. They are indicated for use in cases where either decay, fracture, or massive fillings have left little of your natural tooth. Crowns are a very predictable restoration that have been used in dentistry for centuries. They are made of gold, porcelain, or a combination of the two. A crown will provide both strength, and a lifelike appearance to your tooth. They have a life span that is significantly longer than amalgam or composite fillings, but requires that we prepare more of your natural tooth to place it. In some cases it may be necessary to perform endodontic therapy or a "root canal" prior to placing a crown. To place a crown typically involves two appointments.

Cerec - A cerec restoration is a computer generated filling or crown that is bonded into your tooth. When it is bonded in place it will restore the tooth to a strength comparable to the strength of the natural unrestored tooth. It can be placed with a less invasive preparation than a typical crown, preserving more of your natural tooth. The cerec porcelain material comes in colors to closely match your existing tooth shade. It is performed in one visit and has the life span comparable to a traditional crown.

We hope this gives you some insight into the current materials and techniques available to you to restore your teeth. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

The above restorative options were presented to me on this date.

Patient Signature

Date