

Introduction

To fill a cavity on a tooth with a restorative material, the two most commonly used filling materials are dental amalgam and composite resin.

Indications

1. Dental Decay.
2. Tooth Wear or Fractures.
3. Enamel Defects.

Intended benefits and expected outcome

1. Relief of pain and / or sensitivity.
2. Prophylaxis / Treatment of infection.
3. Restoration of function and aesthetics.
4. Restoration of tooth contour, to facilitate daily oral hygiene measures.

The Operation

- A. Amalgam**
1. Local anaesthesia may be necessary.
 2. Remove any decay before filling the cavity with amalgam.
 3. The filling is carved and polished.
- B. Composite Resin**
1. Local anaesthesia may be necessary.
 2. Remove any decay or weaken enamel.
 3. The tooth is then etched (e.g. with 30% phosphoric acid), rinsed thoroughly and dried.
 4. A thin layer of adhesive is applied to the etched tooth.
 5. Composite resin is used to fill the cavity or repair the defect.
 6. A white or blue light is used to harden the composite resin.
 7. The filling is then shaped and polished.

Preoperative Preparation

Patient should inform the dentist of any medical condition (e.g. diabetes mellitus, heart disease, hypertension) and any regular medication (e.g. anticoagulant) including herbs and dietary supplement.

Postoperative Instruction

1. Patients who have amalgam fillings should avoid chewing with the repaired tooth within 24 hours.
2. Coffee, tea or smoking would stain the composite fillings. If discoloration becomes severe, the filling may be redone if necessary.
3. The repaired tooth may be sensitive at first. Avoid drinks that may be too hot or too cold. If condition worsens, please schedule a visit with your dentist.
4. Pulpitis may occur in patients with severe tooth decay. If swelling and severe pain occurs, schedule a visit with your dentist as further treatment may be necessary.

Common Risks and Complications

There are certain side effects and risks of complications. The dental team will take every measure to minimize their occurrence.

1. Tooth Sensitivity.
2. Recurrent Decay.
3. Dislodgement of filling materials.

Uncommon Risks with Serious Consequences (<1% risk) Acute Pulpitis**Consequences if Untreated**

1. Dental Pain.
2. Difficulty in eating.
3. Pulpitis.
4. Dental alveolar abscess and infection.

Follow Up See the doctor as scheduled.

- * If you have problems after our normal dental clinic hours, you may call our Out-Patient Department (Tel No: 2711 5222) or go to A&E department of nearby hospital.
- * Patient of "Loving Smiles Dental Service for Intellectual Disability" please consult attending dentist directly.

Remarks

This is general information only and the list of complications is not exhaustive. Other unforeseen complications may occasionally occur. In special patient groups, the actual risk may be different. For further information please contact your doctor Evangel Hospital reserves the right to amend this leaflet without prior notice. We welcome suggestions or enquiries on the information provided in this leaflet. Please contact our Healthcare professionals so that we could follow up and make improvement.

References

Cleveland Clinic: "Dental Fillings" (2021) <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/treatments/17002-dental-fillings> (03-08-2023)