

# POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS FILLINGS

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## **YOU JUST HAD A NEW FILLING. THIS IS WHAT YOU MAY FEEL:**

- Hot sensitivity that may last a few days
- Cold sensitivity that may last a few months, but gradually decreasing in pain during that period.
- Sensitivity to chewing that may last a few months, but gradually decreasing in pain during that period.
- After the numbness wears off, you may notice that you are not biting correctly. Please call so your bite can be adjusted. You may not feel this for some time if the bite is only slightly high. When you are numb, it is hard for you to judge if you are biting your teeth together correctly.
- If your gums are sore around the restored tooth, use warm salt water rinses (mix ½ tsp salt in a glass of warm water) every hour until it feels better.

## **CAN I CHEW ON MY NEW FILLING?**

White fillings are hard right away, so you can chew on them immediately. However, they may be sensitive.

Silver fillings are soft for the first 24 hours so please chew on the other side of your mouth. Chewing too soon may cause small fractures that affect the longevity of the restoration. In some cases the filling may even come out. If silver fillings were placed on both sides of the mouth, please eat only soft foods for the first 24 hours.

Since children usually do not follow the 24 hour rule for silver fillings, it is more likely that their fillings will come out. Children cannot usually tell if they are missing a filling. A few weeks after the fillings are done, check the fillings to be sure they are intact. If a filling is left out until their next cleaning, the cavity will get larger and deeper than before.

## **POSSIBLE NEED FOR ROOT CANAL TREATMENT**

Any filling no matter what the size or depth may result in the need for a root canal. The symptoms to look for include:

- Hot sensitivity that lasts for more than a few weeks
- Hot sensitivity that begins after the tooth has been problem free for a period of time
- Spontaneous pain that occurs anytime during the day or night
- Swelling in either the mouth or face
- Cold sensitivity that lingers for many minutes. Sharp instantaneous reaction to cold is probably not a root canal symptom.

This is the same for children except a pulpotomy (baby root canal) is performed.

## **TOOTH BREAKAGE**

Any time a filling is placed there is less natural tooth. With less natural tooth the tooth is weaker, especially where the filling meets the tooth. Filling material is weaker than natural tooth. If your tooth breaks, a new filling may be put in if the break is not too large. If the break is too large, a crown will be recommended to protect the remaining tooth.