

COMPOSITE FILLING(S) POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS

In order to avoid any issues with your new filling(s), please read the following to ensure proper healing and long-lasting results.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Numbness: Your mouth may remain numb for **several hours**. Avoid chewing, drinking hot liquids, or biting your lips, cheeks, or tongue until the numbness fully wears off.

- Once the numbness wears off, feel around with your tongue to make sure everything feels smooth. There should be no rough spots or sharp edges. If there are, please call or text our office. It is possible to have residual numbness or tingling for **6+ weeks**. If it lasts longer than that, please call or text our office.

Eating and Drinking

- Composite fillings harden right away, so you can eat once the numbness wears off.
- Start with softer foods until your comfort returns.
- If you had a filling that is on the biting surface/edge of a front tooth, it is pertinent that you do NOT bite into anything hard, sticky, crunchy or chewy as this can cause the filling to chip or dislodge. It is normally recommended to wear an occlusal guard, night guard, or retainer to help protect these types of fillings. Be sure to ask your dentist if you do not have one already.

Oral Care

- Brush and floss normally unless directed otherwise.
- Keep the area clean to help the tooth and gums heal.
- If you have an existing occlusal guard, night guard, or retainer make sure it fits around your new filling. If adjustments are needed, please call or text our office.
 - If adjustments to the appliance are needed, there may be a fee depending on the extent of the adjustments.
 - If the adjustments required are too extensive a new appliance may be needed, which the associated costs be the patient's financial responsibility.

Discomfort, pain, or sensitivity:

- What is normal:
 - Mild cold sensitivity that does not linger and continues to improve over time.
 - Mild discomfort and bleeding in the gums around the filling.
 - Mild soreness at the injection site(s).
 - Floss should move smoothly between teeth without catching or tearing, though some soreness while flossing may occur during the initial weeks.
- Please call or text our office if:
 - The cold sensitivity is extreme
 - The cold sensitivity lingers for longer than **5-10 seconds**
 - The cold sensitivity persists for more than **6-8 weeks**
 - The tooth has hot sensitivity
 - The tooth has spontaneous pain
 - The tooth pain wakes you up at night
 - If your bite feels "high" or uncomfortable once the numbness wears off.

- **DO NOT WAIT TO CALL OR TEXT!** The bite will not get better over time. An uneven bite can cause pain or damage the filling and sometimes even damage the tooth! You should have the bite adjusted within **2 weeks**. Avoid hard or chewy foods until it is adjusted to prevent further inflammation.
 - Gums that are still bleeding or are swollen after **2 weeks**
 - Soreness at the injection site(s) that lasts longer than **2 weeks**
 - Floss catches or tears or is sore for longer than **2 weeks**
 - You have any rough spots or sharp edges
 - You have discomfort, pain or sensitivity that appears several weeks after your filling is placed
- Please note that any time a tooth has a restoration placed in it, your body will illicit an inflammatory response. Each individual response will vary. It can take some people longer for the inflammation to decrease than others. If the decay was close to the nerve, your dentist should have told you. This will increase the risk that this inflammation becomes irreversible or causes the pulp (nerve and blood supply to the tooth) to die off, in which case **root canal therapy** may be needed.
- If your filling was large, your dentist should have informed you. If this is the case, know that large fillings have a higher risk of breaking. If this happens, it is possible that additional treatment may be needed, i.e. a **crown**.

Pain Management

- To minimize pain, over-the-counter medications can be taken as long as you do not have any allergies to them or have any other medical contraindications. Take **600-800mg** ibuprofen (**Motrin, Advil**) every **6-8 hours** and **500mg** acetaminophen (**Tylenol**) every **4 hours** as needed for pain. An example of this is below:

0 hr	4 hr	8 hr	12 hr	16 hr	20 hr	24 hr
Ibuprofen		Ibuprofen		Ibuprofen		Ibuprofen
Tylenol	Tylenol	Tylenol	Tylenol	Tylenol	Tylenol	Tylenol

- All medications should not exceed the recommended dosage.
- For children, please reference medication bottle for appropriate dosage based on weight.
- It is important to take medication before the numbness wears off.
- Warm saltwater rinses (½ teaspoon salt in 8 oz of warm water) can help the soft tissue heal. Gently rinse with warm salt water for **30-60 seconds** and spit **2-3 times** a day or after every meal.

WARRANTY

We are committed to providing high-quality dental care with lasting results. To ensure peace of mind, we offer limited warranties on all our fillings, provided patients maintain regular dental care and follow recommended guidelines.

- For most fillings, we offer a **2-year** warranty.
- For fillings that are on the biting surface/edge of front teeth, we offer a **1-year** warranty, due to the vulnerability of these fillings.

Warranty Eligibility Requirements

To keep your warranty active, you must:

- Maintain routine exams and cleanings at least twice a year and x-rays at least once per year (or as recommended).
- Follow all oral hygiene instructions provided by our dental team.
- Wear prescribed night guards, retainers, or other appliances as directed.
- Keep financial accounts with our office in good standing.
- Notify our office promptly of any issues or discomfort related to the treatment.
- Avoid habits that compromise dental work such as smoking, nail biting, chewing ice, or using teeth to open objects.
- Consent to recommended follow-up care, adjustments, or re-evaluations when clinically indicated.

Warranty Exclusions

The warranty does not cover:

- Damage from trauma, accidents, or misuse.
- Normal wear and tear beyond expected clinical lifespan.
- Decay or infection under restorations due to poor hygiene or missed appointments.
- Loss or irreparable damage to removable appliances (i.e. retainers, guards, dentures).
- Failure to follow post-op instructions.
- Refusal of recommended adjunctive care related to treatment (i.e. occlusal guard to protect restorations)
- Treatments performed or altered by another provider outside our practice.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to call or text our office at **(303) 237-1553**. We are here to ensure your comfort and care!