National University
Centre for Oral Health
Singapore



Dental Crowns and Bridges

Dental Crowns

Dental crowns are tooth-shaped caps that are placed over damaged or weakened teeth to restore their strength, shape and function.

A dental crown may be indicated for the following reasons:

- Badly damaged or severely worn down tooth
- Repeated dislodgement of a filling
- Upon completion of root canal treatment for protection of tooth from fractures
- Cracked or fractured tooth



Dental Bridges

Dental bridges are fixed prostheses designed to replace one or more missing teeth by utilizing adjacent teeth for support. The adjacent teeth which support the bridge are called abutment teeth, while the artificial tooth is known as a pontic. Abutment teeth are altered to accommodate the bridge and should be structurally strong for this purpose.



Types of Dental Bridges

Conventional dental bridge: A fixed prosthesis with pontic(s) attached to crowns supported by two or more abutment teeth

Cantilever bridge: A fixed prosthesis with a pontic that is cantilevered and supported by a single abutment tooth

Maryland bridge: A fixed prosthesis with a pontic attached to a metal wing, which is bonded onto one or more abutment tooth/teeth

Types of Materials Used in Dental Crowns and Bridges

Crowns and bridges are custom-made fixed dental prostheses fabricated in the dental laboratory. They can be entirely made of metal, ceramic, or a combination of both.

Risks and Complications in Dental Crown and Bridgework

- Tooth sensitivity, pain or nerve death in vital abutment teeth which may require root canal treatment
- Dental decay under the crown/bridge
- Dislodgement or debonding of fixed prosthesis
- Material chipping or fracturing
- Crown or root fractures

Other Types of Fixed Prostheses

Inlays/Onlays: These are custom-made fixed prostheses that are designed to fit into specific areas of teeth, and can be made of composite resin, ceramic or metal.

Veneers: These are thin, custom-made shells that are bonded to the front surfaces of teeth to improve the shape and colour of natural teeth. They can be made of ceramic or composite resin.



Crown and Bridge Procedure

+ First visit

Your dentist will perform a dental examination, take radiographs and make primary moulds where applicable. You will be advised on the suitable type of fixed prosthesis and any adjunctive procedures required before the crown/bridge procedure.

+ Second visit

This visit involves alteration of the abutment tooth planned to support the prosthesis. Once the tooth preparation is finalised, a copy of it is made by master mould or digital scan. This information is sent to the dental laboratory for the fixed prosthesis to be fabricated. A temporary crown/bridge will be made and temporarily cemented while awaiting the final prosthesis.

+ Third visit

The final prosthesis is adjusted before it is permanently cemented onto the abutment tooth.

*The actual number of appointments may vary depending on the complexity of the case.

Maintaining Your Dental Crown and Bridge

+ Temporary prosthesis

- The temporary prosthesis is made of plastic.
- Exercise care when eating, avoid sticky or hard food that may cause the temporary prosthesis to dislodge or fracture. If this happens, see your dentist immediately to have it re-cemented or remade.
- Brush around your temporary prosthesis as you would usually do for your natural teeth. When you clean the interdental surfaces, pull the floss out from the side to avoid accidental dislodgement.

+ Final Prosthesis

- Brush around your final prosthesis as you would usually do for your natural teeth.
- Practice interdental cleaning with a floss or interdental brush.
- To clean your dental bridge, use a floss threader and floss or Superfloss to clean under the pontic and on the sides of the abutment teeth.
- Avoid eating hard food such as bones, nuts, and ice as this may damage your prosthesis or natural teeth.
- If you grind your teeth in your sleep, consider wearing a night guard to protect your teeth and prosthesis.
- Schedule regular dental visits to have your teeth checked and cleaned.

Our Patient Care Institutions

National University Hospital
Ng Teng Fong General Hospital &
Jurong Community Hospital
Alexandra Hospital
National University Polyclinics
Jurong Medical Centre
National University Cancer Institute, Singapore
National University Heart Centre, Singapore
National University Centre for Oral Health, Singapore
NUHS Diagnostics
NUHS Pharmacy

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NUHS Dental: (65) 6716 2233
NUHS Dental General Enquiries/ Appointments: NUHS_Dental@nuhs.edu.sg
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