

## Dental Filling Procedure Post-Op Instructions

Please remember that after any dental work, it takes time to adjust to your new bite. It can take several days or weeks for your brain to recognize the new bite. This is completely normal.

### Tips

1. If you were given a local anesthetic, your lips and mouth muscles may be numb so it will be hard for your brain to tell if you bite it or not. Use Straws carefully on the side that is not numb. You'll want to refrain from chewing, biting, eating until the numbness wears off to prevent scalding yourself. **Avoid chewing in the area to prevent accidentally biting your tongue or cheeks**
2. If you detect any high spots or problems with your bite, or certain area that hurts when you bite on it, call our office so we can schedule an appointment to adjust your bite.
3. It's normal to experience some hot and cold sensitivity following a filling procedure. Teeth require some time to heal after removal of tooth structure and may be sensitive in the meantime.
4. Soreness in the gum tissue surrounding your tooth is common after certain procedures; however, symptoms usually disappear within a few days. Rinsing with warm salt water in the area can help alleviate the soreness and promote faster healing.

### Discomfort

**1-**At the site where the local anesthetic (numbing agent) was injected, you might have some bruising or swelling that will resolve in a few days—just like a bruise that occurs anywhere else on your body.

**2-**Take an anti-inflammatory such as ibuprofen or naproxen to limit or resolve any initial discomfort. Normally, the discomfort will disappear within the next few days or weeks. If the pain doesn't subside or becomes severe, give us a call.

**3-**Your jaw might be sore due to keeping your mouth open for an extended period during the procedure. If you experience temporomandibular (TMJ) soreness, avoid opening your mouth extremely wide or chewing on foods that cause discomfort until the issue resolves. An ice pack or warm compress along with an anti-inflammatory such as ibuprofen or naproxen can help.

You may notice increased salivation. This is because your brain is responding to the new size and shape of your teeth. This should return to normal in about a week.

**4-**Daily brushing and flossing are a must. Consistent plaque removal is critical for the long-term success of your new restoration as are regular professional cleaning appointments.

**5-**Any food that can crack, chip, or damage a natural tooth can do the same to your new filling. *Do not bite into hard foods* such as hard nuts, peanut brittle, ice, apples, frozen candy bars, sticky caramel, or anything else that can put undue pressure on your teeth.

***Never use your teeth as tools!*** Teeth are not meant to open frozen vegetable bags, pull on strings, or hold objects. Also, no biting on fingernails, chewing pencils, or doing anything else that could cause pressure or trauma to your teeth.