



Patient Information Leaflet Tooth coloured fillings

Cork University Dental
School & Hospital



This leaflet has been designed to explain tooth-coloured fillings and it contains answers to many frequently asked questions. If you have any other questions that the leaflet does not answer, or if you would like further information, please ask us.

Why do I need a tooth-coloured filling?

Tooth-coloured filling materials are used to fill cavities caused by decay, replace discoloured fillings or to restore the shape and appearance of teeth following trauma. They are also used in other Restorative Dentistry procedures.

What is involved in having a tooth-coloured filling?

Generally, but not always, you will need a local anaesthetic. A thin rubber sheet known as a rubber dam will be placed over the teeth to keep the tooth dry. The decay or the leaking filling will be removed using a dental drill. Then, the tooth-coloured filling material will be placed in layers and hardened by using a blue light. Once the entire cavity has been filled, the rubber dam will be removed and adjustments will be made to suit your bite. Finally, the filling will be polished.

What are the risks with tooth-coloured fillings?

- Very rarely, people can have an allergic reaction to the components of white fillings. If you have any allergies please discuss this with your dentist.
- It is common to experience sensitivity in your teeth after having fillings. This usually settles down, but sometimes it might need further treatment.
- With large tooth-coloured fillings, there is a risk that the nerve may die and you might need root canal treatment or an extraction later on.
- The white filling, or the tooth it is in, may crack and require further treatment.
- Tooth-coloured filling materials can stain, particularly if you smoke, drink tea and coffee, or eat foodstuffs with colourings. Over time, the colour of the filling may change and need replacement.

This leaflet is available online at <http://www.ucc.ie/en/dentalschool/patients/>