

## **Dental Bonding**

Dental bonding refers to a process that uses a tooth-colored composite material for repairing damage to teeth, such as cavities, chips, and cracks. The resin used in bonding can also be used to change the shape of teeth for functional or cosmetic purposes, addressing issues such as exposed roots, small gaps, and uneven teeth. In this way, bonding can act as a non-invasive form of a smile makeover.

The procedure can usually be performed in one office visit.

### **What Does Dental Bonding Involve?**

Dr. Orr, Dr. Wilson, or Asha (EFDA) will first select a resin that is a color match for your teeth. Depending on the type of treatment, an anesthetic may be used as well.

To prepare your tooth, Dr. Orr, Dr. Wilson, or Asha (EFDA) will briefly apply then thoroughly rinse off an acidic solution to the surface where the bonding material will be attached. The resin will then be placed and shaped by the doctor before being hardened with a curing light. Dr. Orr or Dr. Wilson will repeat this same process, building up the resin until it is in its final shape.

Once complete, the bonding material is firmly attached to your tooth, and looks and feels smooth. You may notice some slight sensitivity after the treatment, but this should subside shortly afterward.

### **Aftercare**

The composite resin used in dental bonding isn't as strong as natural teeth enamel, so some care should be taken not to bite or chew on especially hard items such as ice, fingernails, or hard candy, which could cause the resin to crack or chip. The resin may stain from drinking a lot of coffee or tea, as well as from tobacco use. You should notify your dentist if you happen to notice any rough edges or places that don't feel right, or if the bite doesn't feel quite right. Aside from that, caring for your bonded tooth should be done as you would all of your teeth, by brushing twice a day and flossing.

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## **Veneers**

### **What are porcelain veneers?**

Porcelain veneers are a means of giving your smile an aesthetic makeover using thin shells of porcelain. The veneers are bonded over the front-facing surfaces of your teeth, giving them an entirely new appearance.

### **Why should I consider porcelain veneers?**

Veneers are an option for anyone who suffers from tooth discoloration of a type that can't be treated with professional tooth whitening. They can also improve the appearance of teeth that have suffered small chips, cracks, or other wear and tear. Veneers can even help in cases where there are minor gaps or spaces between teeth, or if you have teeth that don't line up properly.

There are many cases where veneers may be a great option for improving the look of your smile.

### **What does getting veneers involve?**

As veneers are bonded to the front surfaces of your teeth, a minor amount of reshaping and preparation is required. For this reason, veneers are best done in instances where other treatments are unable to achieve the results you want.

Once any outstanding concerns with your oral health have been addressed, getting veneers will normally take four visits. The first will involve taking impressions of your teeth, which will allow the dental laboratory to create a

diagnostic wax up. The dental lab will meticulously create the ideal shape and contour for each tooth being considered for a veneer to give it an ideal shape, on a plaster model of your teeth.

When the wax up is returned, you will return for a second visit, where a mockup of the veneers will be created on your teeth from the diagnostic wax up. You will leave the office with composite resin that will look and feel very much like what the final veneers will. This will give you and any family members or significant others an opportunity to see what the final veneers can look like. You will go home and have an opportunity to evaluate them for several days.

The third visit will involve preparing each of your teeth and choosing the best color for your new veneers. Though the reshaping of your teeth will be fairly minor, a local anesthetic will still be used to ensure your comfort during the procedure. Once this step is complete, Dr. Orr or Dr. Wilson will make an impression of your teeth which will be used to design your veneers to be a perfect fit. This impression will be sent to a dental lab where the veneers will be manufactured. You may be provided with temporary veneers while you wait for these to be ready, which will be very much like the “mock up” veneers done at the second visit.

On the fourth visit, the final veneers will be bonded into place. The veneers are quite stable, and you can chew on them immediately after they are inserted. You may have one or additional follow up visits, if needed to perfect the fit, bite, and appearance. And you'll have your new award-winning smile!

### **How do I care for my veneers?**

You should care for your teeth as you normally would; brushing twice a day, using the interdental brushes, and flossing. Regular exams with the dentist are still important, during which the condition of your veneers will be checked.

If properly cared for, your new veneers should last for many years before they need to be replaced. You should keep in mind, however, that damaged veneers cannot be repaired, only replaced. For this reason, you should be careful not to chip them. Avoid biting into hard objects or using your teeth to open packages.

Also, while veneers will resist staining, you should still be sure to brush your teeth after drinking anything that might cause stains, such as tea, coffee, soft drinks, or wine.

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### **Inlays and Onlays**

For teeth with large damaged areas, Dr. Orr or Dr. Wilson offers inlays and onlays to restore the tooth back to its normal function.

#### **Inlays**

When one of our patients suffers from a cavity that is too severe to treat with a filling, dental inlays will likely be used to treat the cavity. A dental inlay is placed in the tooth and will replace the enamel, and it does not extend over the biting edges of the tooth. After the patient has been numbed with a local anesthetic, Dr. Orr or Dr. Wilson will remove decay from the infected tooth, create an optical impression of the tooth using CEREC, and mill a hard, durable inlay from composite resin or porcelain in a shade that matches the color of the rest of the tooth. Because Dr. Orr and Dr. Wilson complete the inlay in one day, no temporary or provisional veneer is needed—the tooth will be completed in one day, ready to eat dinner on that night!

#### **Onlays**

Compared to inlays, onlays act like a partial crown, and dentists typically opt to fit an onlay to their patient if they believe the tooth surface is too weak to endure a regular filling. After numbing the tooth, Dr. Orr or Dr. Wilson will clean out the cavity and create an optical impression of the tooth using CEREC, and mill a hard, durable inlay from composite resin or porcelain in a shade that matches the color of the rest of the tooth. Because Dr. Orr and Dr. Wilson complete the inlay in one day, no temporary or provisional veneer is needed—the tooth will be completed in one day.

If you are interested in learning more about the details of inlays and onlays, feel free to schedule an appointment with our team at University Dental Associates.