

What is a dental crown?

A crown, also known as a ‘cap’, is a dental restoration which covers, encircles, and protects a tooth. Today, the material of choice is ceramic-based materials, which are tooth-coloured. However, in specific cases, gold crowns are sometimes used on the very back molars.



A crown has many functions and may be used for various purposes. Some important uses are:

- 1) Protect a weak tooth – When a tooth has a large filling, it becomes more fragile. This often results in cracks forming within the tooth. If multiple cracks form in a tooth, this greatly increases the likelihood of the tooth fracturing (as the two cracks meet). We want to avoid fracture at all costs, as sometimes the fracture cannot be fixed, and the tooth must be removed. Beyond fracture, cracked teeth can cause pain, discomfort, or infection.
 - A crown protects a weak tooth by hugging it together, preventing the cracks from getting deeper, and preventing a fracture from occurring.
- 2) Restore a fractured tooth – If a cusp is broken from a tooth, it can be very difficult to recreate the proper shape of teeth with just a filling. Also, once a part of a tooth is fractured, it puts more stress on the other parts of the tooth. This will inevitably lead to the failure of the filling or tooth.
 - A crown resolves this issue by distributing stresses more favorably and provides longevity for the tooth that far exceeds a large filling.
- 3) Cosmetic – Crowns provide great flexibility in manipulating the shape and color of the tooth. This can be done for a single front tooth or multiple front teeth to create a more harmonious smile. A veneer is very similar to a crown; however, it only covers the front surface of a tooth, and not the entire tooth.

