



## February is Dental Health Month



Each February, the American Dental Association sponsors National Children's Dental Health Month to raise awareness about the importance of oral health.

Developing good habits at an early age and scheduling regular dental visits helps children get a good start on a lifetime of healthy teeth and gums.

Children should:

- Visit the dentist by their first birthday.
- Brush carefully twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste and rinse thoroughly.
- Floss between teeth, braces and under wires
- Have their teeth cleaned by a dental professional every six months
- Avoid sweets, chips, and soda



### When You Lose a Tooth

If a missing tooth is not replaced, the teeth beside it lose part of their support. So they may start leaning into the gap. Even the opposing tooth may drift into it. As these teeth drift, their neighbors also may move. In time, several teeth can become loose and crooked. They are harder to clean, so **bacteria** (germs) collect on them. This can lead to gum disease, which threatens the roots of the remaining teeth. So you might wind up losing even more teeth. Over time, the bone in your jaw can shrink in the areas where each root used to be.



## Dentures & Partials

Denture fabrication from start to finish normally takes about **one month** to complete depending on the difficulty of the case. Several appointments at the dental office are necessary.

The initial appointment is **diagnosis and treatment planning**. An impression or dental mold is then taken of existing teeth and/or existing tissue structure. For partial dentures several retentive features are placed in existing teeth called rest preps and are used to retain the denture.

The second appointment is a "**wax try-in**" appointment. What this means is wax is constructed in accordance with the existing tissue structure and used to establish a bite registration. The wax is heated and a natural bite is established taking into account proper vertical dimensions and jaw position.

The third appointment is the "**teeth try-in**" appointment. This appointment insures proper teeth alignment, color, shape and fit.

The final appointment is **delivery of the denture with minor adjustments** as needed and instructions given.

### Crowns



A crown is the most common way to restore a single damaged tooth to its normal size and shape. It may be made of gold, other metals, porcelain or porcelain fused to metal. If your crown will be visible when you smile, your dentist will try to match it to the color of nearby teeth.



## Restoring Damaged or Missing Teeth

Your smile is what lights up your face. But damaged and missing teeth may make you too self-conscious to smile. They may also make your mouth hurt, especially when you eat. Your dentist has several ways of restoring a smile and ending any pain. One of them will likely work for you.

### Four Main Ways to Restore Teeth

<b>Crown</b>	An artificial cover that fits over a damaged tooth to restore its size and shape. It is often called a "cap"
<b>Bridge</b>	A fixed replacement for one or more missing teeth. The teeth beside the gap are reshaped to support the bridge.
<b>Implant</b>	An artificial root that supports a replacement tooth. By replacing the root, it helps keep the jawbone stable.
<b>Partial Denture</b>	A removable replacement for missing teeth. It requires special care and regular adjustments.

### Bridge Types

#### Conventional

This bridge is made up of two crowns linked by a replacement tooth. The natural teeth on both sides of the gap are shaped so that the crowns can fit over them.

#### Cantilever

This bridge is supported on only one side of the gap, so it has less support than a conventional bridge. It is used mostly in the front of the mouth, where the pressure of chewing isn't as strong. It sometimes replaces the last tooth in the back.

#### Maryland (or resin bonded)

This bridge uses thin metal "wings" to hold the replacement tooth in place. The wings are cemented to the backs of both teeth next to the gap. This bridge disturbs nearby teeth less than the other kinds of bridges. The bonding can come loose over time.

## Good Diet = Healthier Teeth



### When Your Bite Isn't Right

Without treatment, a broken, cracked, or missing tooth can cause pain and lead to more problems. A bad crack can damage the inside of a tooth so much that you could lose the tooth. When you lose a tooth for any reason, the remaining upper and lower teeth may not fit together



### Looking Ahead to Treatment

Your dentist will recommend the best treatment for you.

#### Durability

With proper care, any restoration will probably last many years. Ask your dentist how long yours is likely to last.

#### Treatment Times

**Crown or bridge:** Plan on 2 or 3 dental visits of at least an hour apiece.

**Implant:** Plan on 1 or 2 oral surgeries and 3 or more dental visits spaced over several months.

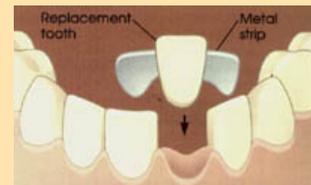
**Partial Denture:** Plan on several dental visits a few weeks apart, then further adjustments at your regular checkups.



Conventional Bridge



Cantilever Bridge



Maryland Bridge