

Tooth Restorations (Fillings) for Children

Your child has need of decay removal from teeth and placement of some form of tooth restoration. There are a few alternatives for this procedure that you may consider:

1. Silver amalgam is the most commonly used restorative material for children. It has been used since the 1800s. It is metallic in color and does not match tooth color. Also, silver amalgam can be used only in small to moderate sized cavities.

There have been some objections raised by numerous individuals and groups about the potential for the mercury in silver amalgam to be harmful to patients. Health organizations, including the American Dental Association and the World Health Organization, deny this allegation.

2. Various tooth-colored restorative materials can be used for restoration of your child's teeth. Some of these materials contain decay-preventive small amounts of fluoride. In many countries, these tooth-colored materials are very popular. Their use has now been shown to be as acceptable in longevity for children's teeth as silver amalgam.
3. Stainless steel crowns can be placed if the decay is extensive. Although unsightly, these crowns serve well. Some groups object to the nickel content of these crowns, but that objection has little scientific support for the type of nickel alloy used in these crowns.
4. Various types of tooth-colored crowns are available for children with extensive decay. Ask your dentist about the type he or she uses.