

A dental filling is used to repair and restore a tooth when it has become damaged, usually by dental caries (decay) or fracture.

The tooth is first 'prepared' in order to remove damaged or diseased tooth tissue. The tooth is then restored using one or more of a variety of materials, which may be layered to form a foundation and outer covering.

The main aim of a filling is to restore comfort, function and appearance, while maintaining as much of the tooth substance as possible.

The materials we choose from depend on a number of factors such as its strength, suitability, durability, appearance and cost and include:

- **Silver Amalgam** – a very strong, durable and cost effective material but poor in colour and contains metals such as mercury
- **Direct Composite Resin** – a tooth coloured resin material, which is strong and pleasing to look at but takes longer to place and often costs a little more due to the additional time taken for the correct technique
- **Glass Ionomer** – a tooth coloured material, which sticks well to teeth and helps inhibit decay by releasing fluoride, although it is less durable than the other materials. It is often used as a base layer or in children's teeth

