

# Restoring a Large Cavity

When a tooth has a large cavity, the best treatment is often to protect the tooth with a crown instead of placing a filling. A filling may weaken the tooth, while a crown covers and protects it.

## Why not place a filling?

Placing a filling can weaken the tooth because first the decay must be removed, and then the remaining tooth structure must be shaped to hold the filling.

With small fillings, this process may leave enough structure to support the tooth. However, when a large portion of your tooth has been damaged by decay, we need to remove a significant amount of the tooth in order to remove all of the decay.

Placing a large filling can leave your tooth without much of its natural structure; so it also loses much of its support and strength. As a result, the tooth can easily fracture, or a portion of it can break away entirely.



*Large cavity*



*Broken tooth*



*Placing a crown*

## Benefits of a crown

Placing a crown can prevent these problems. A crown covers and protects the tooth. It seals out plaque and bacteria and restores the strength and shape of the tooth.

## Determining the need for a crown

When we evaluate the cavity in your tooth, we consider both the size of the cavity and the amount of healthy tooth structure that remains. To determine if a crown is right for you, we perform a thorough examination.

There are several kinds of crowns, including those made from gold, porcelain fused to a metal base, or porcelain. Together, we will decide which kind of crown is best for your situation.