

ASK YOUR DENTIST ABOUT

white fillings



Advances in modern dental materials and techniques increasingly offer new ways to create more pleasing, natural-looking smiles.



silver filling (amalgam)



white filling (composite)

There are many possible materials that can be used to repair damaged or decayed teeth, and the choice of which one is right for you requires careful consideration of your individual needs.

Today, more patients ask their dentists about white fillings because they want their teeth to look healthy when they laugh, talk and smile. White fillings, also called composite fillings, are made from tooth-colored materials that restore the natural appearance of a decayed or previously filled tooth. Because they blend well with tooth enamel and don't look like fillings, your dentist may recommend white fillings if the teeth to be restored are near the front of your mouth.

A composite filling usually requires only one visit during which the tooth is prepared and restored. An advantage of composite fillings compared to other dental restorations is that less of the healthy part of a tooth must be removed to hold a composite filling in place. This is due to the ability to adhesively bond composite materials to teeth.

The procedure for a composite filling may take a little longer because after the decay is removed, the tooth must be kept totally isolated from saliva. The dentist carefully applies an adhesive followed by several thin layers of the tooth-colored composite. Once the filling is in place, it is chemically hardened (cured) for less than a minute with a special light.

Composites are preferable for obvious cosmetic reasons, but if the decayed area is large or is subject to heavy chewing pressure, your dentist may recommend another type of material or restoration.

Other types of white fillings include composite inlays as well as porcelain inlays and onlays. Inlays and onlays are used to restore teeth that are badly damaged by decay or wear. They may be applied to the chewing surfaces of the back teeth when aesthetics are of concern.

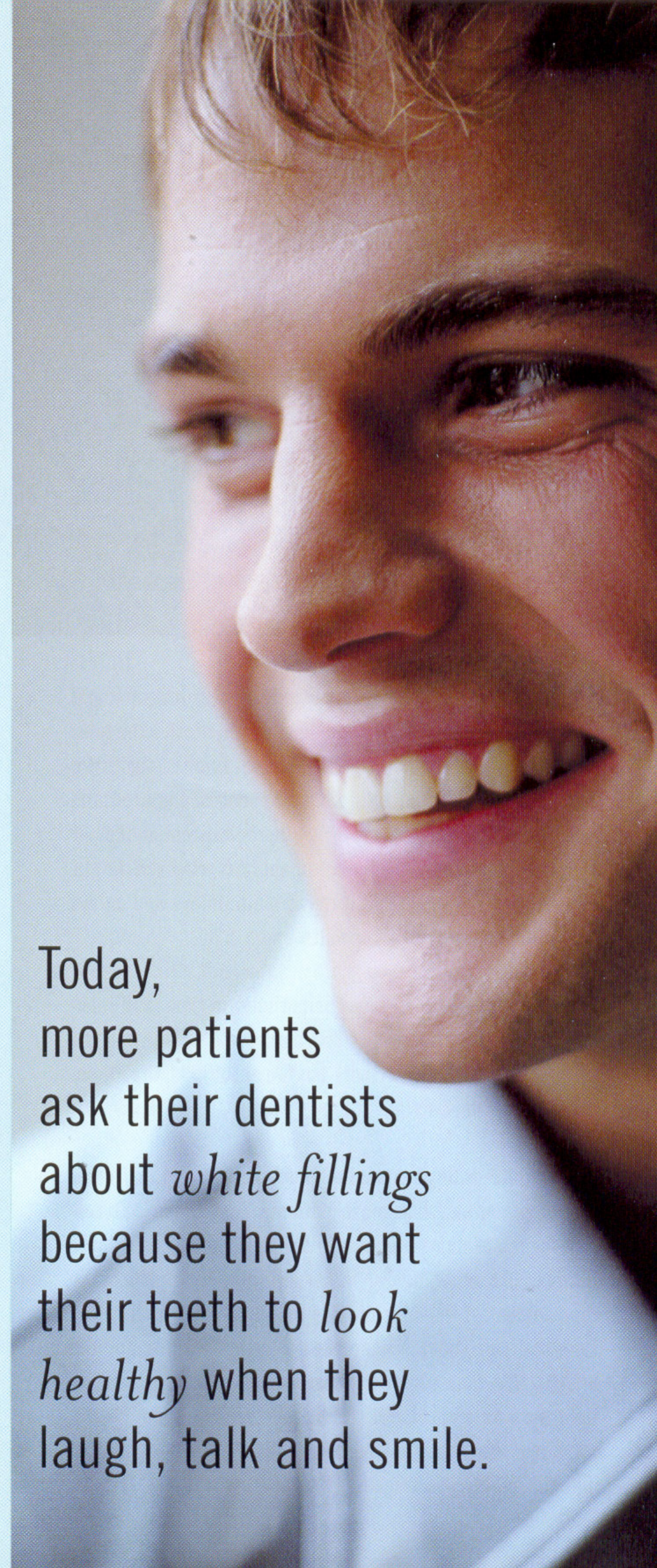


> White fillings, also called composite fillings, are made from tooth-colored materials that restore the natural appearance of a decayed or previously filled tooth.

First, the tooth is prepared by removing damaged tooth structure. The remaining tooth is shaped to receive the inlay or onlay. The dentist next makes an impression of the tooth, the opposing teeth and the bite. A model is prepared and from that model the inlay or onlay is custom made. At a subsequent visit, the inlay or onlay is checked for fit before the dentist cements it to the tooth. Inlays and onlays generally require two office visits.

You may experience some sensitivity to hot and cold temperatures in the newly filled tooth for a few days or up to a week. If the sensitivity continues beyond that time, contact your dentist.

Some white fillings may be more expensive than other dental materials, but most patients find these natural-looking restorations well worth the additional cost. White fillings, like other dental materials, may require periodic replacement. If the edge of the filling eventually pulls away from the tooth, bacteria can get between the filling and the enamel and may eventually cause decay. Tooth decay over time may develop elsewhere on the tooth. Regular dental checkups are important because they allow the dentist to detect a problem in the early stage.



Today,
more patients
ask their dentists
about *white fillings*
because they want
their teeth to *look*
healthy when they
laugh, talk and smile.



American Dental Association
www.ada.org

Division of Communications
211 East Chicago Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60611

W286

© 2002 American Dental Association

All rights reserved Printed in USA

To purchase additional copies call 1-800-947-4746
or visit www.adacatalog.org