

Complete denture

A complete denture (used to be known as full denture) is a dental prosthesis replacing all the natural teeth and the associated structures of the maxilla or mandible, except usually the wisdom teeth. Complete dentures are usually made of acrylic or metal (cobalt-chrome) and acrylic.

For added stability complete dentures can now be made to rest on dental implants either permanently fixed or locked on to caps on the implants for a “click” fit.

Composite Filling Material.

When used in relation to filling materials the term composite usually refers to a substance made up of an acrylic resin filled with inorganic substances such as glass, lithium aluminum silicate, quartz, or tricalcium phosphate.

The composite is usually, but not always, applied to the tooth in a plastic i.e. pliable form, and sets, either by itself, or with the use of a blue light. A technique called acid etching i.e. etched preparation of the tooth surface, is usually used to improve the stability of the filling in the cavity.

A bonding agent is applied to the tooth surface after etching this glues the etched surface of the tooth to the filling material. Composite filling materials are used most commonly in the restoration of anterior (front) teeth because they have very good aesthetic properties. They are easy to colour match, and come in many shades and brands. We currently use the MIRIS system which has composite to match the outer (enamel) and inner (dentine) surfaces. We colour match both the enamel and dentine before we start and can achieve very close matching to any tooth colour-including whitened teeth.

They are also used now extensively in back teeth, because they are aesthetically more pleasing than amalgam or gold restorations, and also have adequate hardness and strength characteristics. There are still, however limitations on the use of composite filling materials and it is very technique sensitive to get the filling placed correctly as any fluid (water or saliva) will interfere with the bond between tooth and filling.

Crossbite

This term is used to define an abnormal situation when the teeth are held together. In a normal mouth, the upper teeth lie just outside the lower teeth when the patient closes her mouth. In a crossbite situation, the lower tooth or teeth lie outside or in the same vertical line as the upper ones.

Crossbites may occur in one or just a few teeth, or in a row of teeth at the side of the mouth. They may indicate an underlying problem such as a discrepancy between the jaw size, or a habit such as thumb-sucking which needs treatment.