

# COSMETIC TREATMENT

**Q** **What is cosmetic dentistry?**

**A** Nowadays, many people turn to dentistry as a way of improving their appearance, much as they would use cosmetic surgery or even a new hairstyle. Cosmetic treatments include veneers, crowns, bridges and tooth-coloured fillings.

**Q** **Can I replace my silver fillings with white ones?**

**A** There are now alternatives to amalgam fillings. If a tooth needs filling or repairing, white fillings are now a more popular choice. New dental materials mean that it is much easier to find a perfect match for the shade of a particular tooth. In most cases, it is quite impossible to see that the tooth even has a filling.

**Q** **What is a composite filling?**

**A** Composite filling is resin based and is applied as a putty-like material. This can be moulded to the exact shape of the tooth and is then set using a visible blue light. It can be matched exactly to the shade of your tooth and most are now as strong as amalgam, proving to be a successful alternative.

**Q** **How much will it cost?**

**A** White fillings on the biting surfaces of back teeth are only available privately and cost from £75.

**Q** **What is 'sticky' or 'adhesive' dentistry?**

**A** Modern techniques now involve sticking fillings to teeth using special dental adhesives. This technique is often called 'adhesive' or 'sticky' dentistry. The area is treated with a solution that roughens the surface of the tooth – much the same as using sandpaper 'keys' the wall ready for painting. The adhesive is applied and the filling is 'bonded'

to the tooth. The advantages of this method are that the cavity needs less preparation and in some cases it may not be necessary to numb the tooth first.

**Q** **What are veneers**

**A** Veneers are thin slices of porcelain. These are precisely made to fit over the visible surface of front teeth, very much like a false fingernail. There are also 'composite' veneers and these can be completed in just one visit.

**Q** **Why might I have a veneer?**

**A** Veneers are an ideal way of treating discoloured or unsightly teeth, closing gaps between front teeth, or repairing chips and cracks. They can also be used to disguise mild/moderate crowding and rotations.

**Q** **What are veneers made of?**

**A** Porcelain veneers are made in a laboratory by a dental technician, using impressions taken by the dentist.

Composite veneers are built up in the mouth and can be completed in one visit. Although these veneers are slightly more prone to staining and have a shorter life, they are easily polished or repaired.

**Q** **Can I use veneers to close the gaps between my front teeth?**

**A** Yes. Using either composite or porcelain, the dentist can change the shape or size of the tooth very slightly, closing the gap between the teeth.

**Q** **Will my tooth have to be drilled?**

**A** If the teeth are in correct alignment to start with, then veneers usually require removal of 0.5 – 0.7mm of the front tooth surface, and in many cases don't even need an anaesthetic. If the veneers are being placed to correct crowding and rotations, then they do require more tooth preparation.

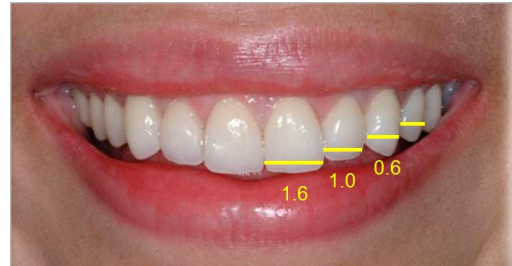
**Q How much do veneers cost?**

**A** Costs will vary depending on the number of veneers placed and the degree of complexity. You will always be given a written estimate before starting treatment. Veneers normally start at £395 each.



**Q How can my crooked teeth be straightened?**

**A** Although this is usually done during the teenage years, many adults now have orthodontic treatment to straighten their crowded/rotated teeth. 'Social 6' braces only take about 12-18 weeks and costs start from £1075.



**Q How can I get my teeth to look whiter?**

The 'gold standard' of tooth whitening is using carbamide peroxide gel in close-fitting, custom-made, vacuum-formed trays. This is worn at nights for 10 days and then for 1 hour during the day for 5 days. The cost is £325.



**Q How do I look after my new smile?**

To keep your healthy smile, it is important to visit your dentist and hygienist regularly, clean your teeth thoroughly, and stick to a healthy diet.



**Q Where do I start?**

Cosmetic dental treatment can be as simple as tooth whitening or replacing an old amalgam filling with a white filling. More complex treatment may be a complete 'smile lift' which involves a detailed smile design followed by multiple veneers. This treatment normally starts with photographs, plaster study models and a cosmetic questionnaire to enable us to understand exactly what part of your smile you want changed.

