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FAMILY DENTISTRY

Why Composite Restorations?

Amalgam (silver) filling is **100+ year old technology**. Dentistry has come just as far in 100 years as other areas of medicine, and far better materials are available for restoring teeth to their full function, namely the latest generation of composite resin restorations.

Amalgam only “plugs the hole”—it does not strengthen or reinforce the tooth in any way. Since the filling is not bonded to the tooth, bacteria can easily make its way under the filling and produce decay which may not be evident until it causes irreversible pulpitis, requiring root canal therapy. Expansion of the metal in amalgams can cause weakened teeth to fracture and therefore require crowns or onlays.

The benefits of composites, on the other hand, are well-researched and documented. These materials bond to enamel and dentin with strength similar to the bond between enamel and dentin layers of a natural tooth. As extra protection, composites contain **fluoride** to help prevent new decay. Smaller restorations can be completed in a single visit, larger restorations (called inlays or onlays) require two visits.

The fact that composites are tooth-colored and virtually invisible, rather than black like amalgams become may be the least of the reasons you would choose them. But if you needed medical treatment, would you choose the most advanced technology available, or a procedure that was developed 100 years ago and had proven, long-term disadvantages to it?

Now, regarding insurance:

There is an enormous amount of research and documentation by leading dental clinicians to support the advantages of composite restorations and the disadvantages of amalgam fillings, but insurance companies debate this evidence to they can pay out as little as possible.

If your insurance company says something isn't covered because they aren't convinced your tooth really “needed” this type restoration, what they mean is that your policy only covers cheaper materials and procedures.

The debate between dentists and the insurance industry on this issue has been going on for many years. Please understand that while we will continue to send your insurance company information about the procedures we use and the need for them, we will **never** let an insurance company dictate what procedures we recommend. Their recommendations are often not what is best for you.

It is our goal to pursue excellence in dentistry, to provide care of the highest standards in technique, materials, sterilization control, and personalized care. Our fees are set by the actual costs of doing business in this particular office. Costs can vary between offices depending on many factors; our fees reflect the quality of service and the care with which it is delivered.

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