



## **Adhesive Dentistry: The Modern Solution To Tooth Restoration**

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Amalgam — the metal mixture of copper, tin and mercury that many of us grew up having for our tooth fillings — can quickly and easily damage your teeth in the plaque, saliva and blood-rich environment called the human mouth. For example, most of us know that metals, in the presence of water, can corrode and break down. Metals also expand and contract with temperature changes, resulting in cracked teeth, and they can leak, causing further decay. This process significantly breaks down your teeth, leading to fractures, root canals, tooth loss, and pain. What’s more, exposure to some of these metals, such as mercury, can have far-reaching negative health effects — so much so that, when a conscientious dentist needs to remove damaged amalgam, they use a dental-dam apparatus and strong suction to carry away these metals and protect the patient from unnecessary exposure.

What’s the solution? Today, as a patient, you clearly have a choice. You can ask if your dentist practices “adhesive dentistry,” or the dental procedures and techniques that use porcelain veneers or dentine-bonded crowns, rather than metal fillings, to repair the teeth. In adhesive dentistry, a tooth-colored composite material is used to repair chipped, cracked, fractured, worn, or broken teeth — even “off-color” teeth that have lost their enamel and appear a shade or two darker than their neighboring teeth.

Adhesion, or the ability to adhere materials to tooth structure, has been studied extensively for over 50 years, and the science has advanced tremendously over the last decade, allowing treatment to be much more conservative and aesthetically-pleasing.

Studies show that approximately 40 percent of all teeth show signs of cracks and fractures that are often asymptomatic, meaning that the patient doesn’t realize he or she has a problem. All too

often, these teeth are ground down unnecessarily, when adhesive dentistry options exist to not only repair the broken-down tooth but to strengthen and reconstruct it to original strength.

Adhesive dentistry has several benefits, including functionality, aesthetic value, minimal invasion, tooth reinforcement, longevity (10-20+ years), and biocompatibility, which no other reconstructive process offers. If you or your child needs a metal dental filling replaced or repaired, ask your dentist about modern adhesive dentistry. Your smile and your health will both be better off.

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