

LifeLong Family Dentistry

Restorative (Filling and Crown) Post-Op Instructions

Following a filling or crown procedure it is very common to experience after effects. This guide will highlight common occurrences, their duration, and remedies.

- 1. Anesthetic Site Discomfort:** It is very common to have a bruised feeling at the site of injection. I think most of us remember vaccinations as children and the after effects. Any injection will disrupt tissue and healing will need to occur. We try very hard to give gentle injections but some soreness can be expected. This soreness may last as long as 10 days. Heat, in the form of warm salt water or a heating pad, will usually speed recovery.
- 2. Gum Soreness:** Frequently, when teeth are being restored we will scuff the gum tissue around the tooth. Most times it simply cannot be avoided. This irritation will present as discomfort worsened by brushing and flossing. While cleaning the area may seem to make things worse it is actually the best treatment. By cleansing the area, gently but thoroughly, you will prevent a secondary infection and allow the tissues to heal. In addition to routine hygiene, warm salt water (1 teaspoon salt in 8 ounces of warm water) is a great help in making the gum tissue feel better. For the first few days following treatment it is best to avoid commercial mouthwash as many contain alcohol that will burn the fragile tissue.
- 3. Temperature Sensitivity:** Is very common following tooth restoration. If a tooth gets a “Zing” from cold foods or beverages, that goes away quickly, it is the tooth’s way of saying, “I don’t like what happened but I will get better”. This type of rapidly resolving discomfort can last a few days to several months. We call this Reversible Pulpitis. The key to Reversible Pulpitis is that it resolves quickly and should be improving over time. If the tooth in question is experiencing lingering pain that takes 30 seconds or more to resolve for hot or cold stimulation, or has pain for no reason, these can be signs of Irreversible Pulpitis. Irreversible Pulpitis is when the nerve begins dying inside the tooth and if left untreated will become an abscess. Obviously, a tooth showing signs of Irreversible Pulpitis needs to be evaluated by Dr. Long.
- 4. Biting Sensitivity or Bite is “Off”:** This is the most common complaint following tooth restoration and is easily corrected. At the time of restoration we try very hard to get your bite perfect. However, since you are numb and have been open for an extended period sometimes your bite needs to settle, resulting in the bite being “off” later on. This problem is usually solved with a minor adjustment to the new crown or filling.

These are the most common issues we encounter following tooth restoration, but certainly not the only ones. If you have a question or concern following your procedure please contact Dr. Long to discuss your condition.