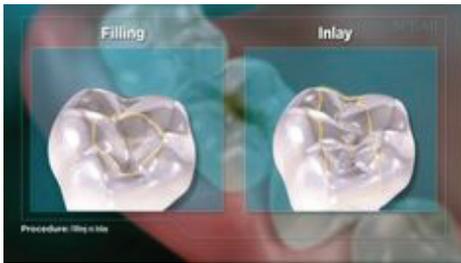


# Filling vs Inlay



When your tooth's structure has been compromised by decay, your doctor may choose to use a filling or an inlay to repair it. There are some differences between these two solutions that you will want to discuss with your doctor.



When repairing a small area of decay, a filling is a great option to replace the damaged portion of the tooth while preserving the majority of the it's natural structure.



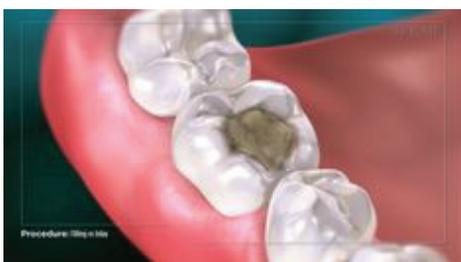
The filling material can be silver amalgam or composite, and is placed directly onto the tooth and shaped within the mouth to match its contour.



Once completed, the filling should halt the decay and keep the tooth healthy for a number of years.



Benefits of a filling include the ability to be completed in a single visit, and lower cost compared to an inlay. However, a filling can have a shorter lifespan and be more prone to potential long-term issues like recurrent decay or cracking.



The other option is an inlay, also known as an indirect restoration. It is the best treatment option when a cavity is too large for a regular filling and more durable reinforcement of the surrounding tooth structure is needed.



The key difference with an inlay is that it is designed and created outside of your mouth using traditional or digital impressions taken at your doctor's office. This means that it is an exact fit over the area where the decay was removed.



Compared to a filling, an inlay is typically less prone to recurrent decay due to the precise fit of the restoration. Additionally, due to the advanced materials that can be used in crafting it, an inlay is often more durable and leaves the tooth less likely to develop cracks over time.



However, depending on the technology used to fabricate it, an inlay may require multiple visits to complete, and is often costlier than a traditional filling.



In the right circumstance, both a filling and an inlay are excellent solutions for repairing decayed or damaged teeth. It is important that you consult with your doctor so the right choice can be made based on your unique needs.