

TOOTH-SUPPORTED BRIDGE

A tooth-supported bridge replaces one or more missing teeth by using the natural teeth for support.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How is a tooth-supported bridge made?

- The supporting teeth next to the missing teeth are shaped for crowns.
- An impression or digital scan is made of the teeth and used to fabricate the bridge.
- The bridge consists of the missing teeth called pontics attached to the crowns.
- The bridge is cemented on to the teeth and is not removeable.

2. What materials are used to make a tooth-supported bridge?

- Tooth-colored ceramic.
- Ceramic fused to a metal foundation.
- Metal alloy-usually gold and other precious metals.

3. What are the benefits of a tooth-supported bridge?

- It replaces missing teeth.
- It helps maintain the bite and prevents teeth from shifting.
- It may improve the smile, restore speech and the ability to chew.

4. What are the risks of a tooth-supported bridge?

- Sensitivity associated with a crowned tooth that may last several months.
- A crowned teeth may need root canal treatment which could be a six percent risk or higher depending on previous treatment.
- It may not copy the natural teeth in terms of shape, size or color.
- Decay may occur on any root surfaces of the teeth not covered by the crowns.
- Recession of the gums may occur, and as a result, the junction of the crowns and teeth may show.
- Food will become trapped under the bridge causing a possible risk to the supporting teeth of decay or gum disease.
- Should the natural teeth change color due to age or bleaching, the color of the bridge will no longer match.
- An excessive bite force may cause the bridge to chip, break or wear.

5. What are the alternatives to a tooth-supported bridge?

- Replacement of the missing teeth with implant-supported crowns.
- Replacement of the missing teeth with a removeable partial denture.
- Leave the space as it is.

6. How long will a tooth-supported bridge last?

- Ceramic fused to metal bridges have a survival rate of approximately 94% after 5 years
- Ceramic-only bridges have a slightly lower survival rate of approximately 88% after 5 years.
- Your dentist will provide guidance as to the choice of bridge material.

