

## The easy-to-understand difference between Cosmetic and restorative dentistry

In the past, most dentistry centred around the prevention of decay and restoration of the teeth if there were problems. In more recent years, cosmetic dentistry has become increasingly popular for people who are keen to improve the look of their smile and to feel better about themselves.

It's easy to become confused about the differences between cosmetic and restorative dentistry even though the two fields share many similarities they are not the same thing.

Cosmetic dental treatments are elective – those who are not happy or satisfied with their smile choose to have them. Restorative dentistry is based on restoring the function and structure of your teeth and sometimes alleviating pain and preventing further issues.

### Common cosmetic dental procedures

The most common types of cosmetic procedures include:

**Teeth whitening** – designed to remove yellowing, staining and discoloration and restore teeth to a lighter shade.

**Veneers** – can be bonded to the front surface of one or more teeth to improve their size, shape or colour.

**Tooth contouring and reshaping** – can change the shape, length and surface of the tooth to improve the alignment of your teeth and smile.

**Dental bridges and crowns** – bridges can replace one or more missing teeth to improve your smile and chewing ability as well as facial structure and to prevent other teeth from moving into the space. For a traditional bridge, crowns replace the natural crowns on either side, holding the bridge in place. The crown is the part of the tooth that is visible above the gums and can also be used to improve a single tooth's appearance.

**Orthodontic braces and aligners** – can reposition uneven or crooked teeth to their correct position. These can be traditional metal brackets and wires, more discrete ceramic braces or clear plastic aligners.

### Common restorative dental procedures

This type of dentistry looks to improve the health of the mouth teeth and gums. When teeth are decayed or damaged, or there is a break in the protective enamel, bacteria can enter the teeth and gums. If left untreated, this can cause decay and infection resulting in more difficult and expensive treatment.

**Fillings** – these are used to fill an area of the tooth that has been removed due to decay or trauma.

**Dental implants** – these are alternatives when teeth are missing. Sometimes it's not possible to restore a tooth and an extraction is the only option which then leaves a gap. Dental implants are becoming common to replace a missing tooth, improve chewing ability and facial structure and to prevent other teeth from moving into the space.

Root canal and dental crown – a root canal is when the soft pulp inside the tooth is removed and the space is filled and sealed. A dental crown is often placed over the tooth to restore its shape, size and strength.

Dental bridges – replace missing teeth where there is a gap. These are often a combination of crowns that fit over the natural teeth on either side of the space. Artificial teeth are then made which bridge the gap.

Dentures – removable or semipermanent false teeth that are worn to replace multiple missing teeth.

If you are due for your check up or want professional advice to discuss your cosmetic or restorative dentistry options, get in touch with the caring and professional team at FamilyDent by calling 22 250 177 or email us [here](#).