



The purpose of this post is to outline the basic steps to caring for your new smile.

Basically, you want to care for your cosmetically enhanced smile just as you would your natural smile - if not better!

Why do we say that?

Well, some people who have had their smile cosmetically enhanced with porcelain veneers or crowns feel that they are no longer susceptible to decay or damage because the teeth are covered with porcelain. This is a false sense of security.

While it is true that the porcelain itself will not “decay” like natural tooth structure, you have to keep in mind that there is still natural tooth beneath/behind/under the porcelain, which can and will decay over time if not cared for properly.

How does this happen?

Any form of breakdown to a cosmetic smile design (aside from outright cracking and breaking from a traumatic accident) will always occur at the margin. What's the margin? It's the point where the porcelain meet the natural tooth structure. It is usually well sealed by the adhesive that bonds these two materials together.

However, over time the acidic nature of the foods that we eat can weaken or erode the adhesive, thereby “breaking” the seal and allowing acid and bacteria to penetrate the microscopic crevice between the tooth and the restoration. Once this happens, it is only a matter of time before tooth decay starts to form under your beautiful new smile.

What can you do?

Well, as with your natural teeth, the best way to avoid this is with proper DAILY maintenance (i.e. brushing and flossing) along with optimal routine professional maintenance (i.e. “cleanings”).

To that end, we recommend the following for your HOME CARE ROUTINE:

It is considered ideal to brush after EVERY MEAL and snack to neutralize the acid attack which automatically follows any food or drink consumption, AND floss thoroughly AT LEAST once a day if not 2-3 times a day!

You would even be wise to increase your brushing efficiency by opting for a power toothbrush of some sort. I prefer sonic brush like Sonicare for the average patient but it has been proven through research that ANY power brush is superior to manual tooth brushing.



Additionally, your dental professional may have a different preference due to other concerns unique to your situation. So, feel free to seek your dental professional's advice in this regard.

We also recommend for your PROFESSIONAL CARE ROUTINE:

You should consider increasing the frequency of your dental hygiene visits. There is no hard scientific data to conclude that this is necessary JUST because you have a porcelain smile. However, the obvious/common sense logic behind this option is to protect your investment. I recommend seeing your dental hygienist every 90 days. This will not only aid in the prevention and maintenance of periodontal complications, but it will also allow your professional dental team to identify potential breakdown in your porcelain restorations BEFORE they become serious threats to the beauty or stability of your beautiful new smile.

If caught early, tooth decay that develops under a porcelain restoration can often be treated in a way that is non-invasive, less expensive and will not require major alteration of your smile!

PLEASE SEE THE POST "HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR NEW SMILE - ADVANCED" for more detailed information on how to properly brush, floss and professionally maintain your new smile.