

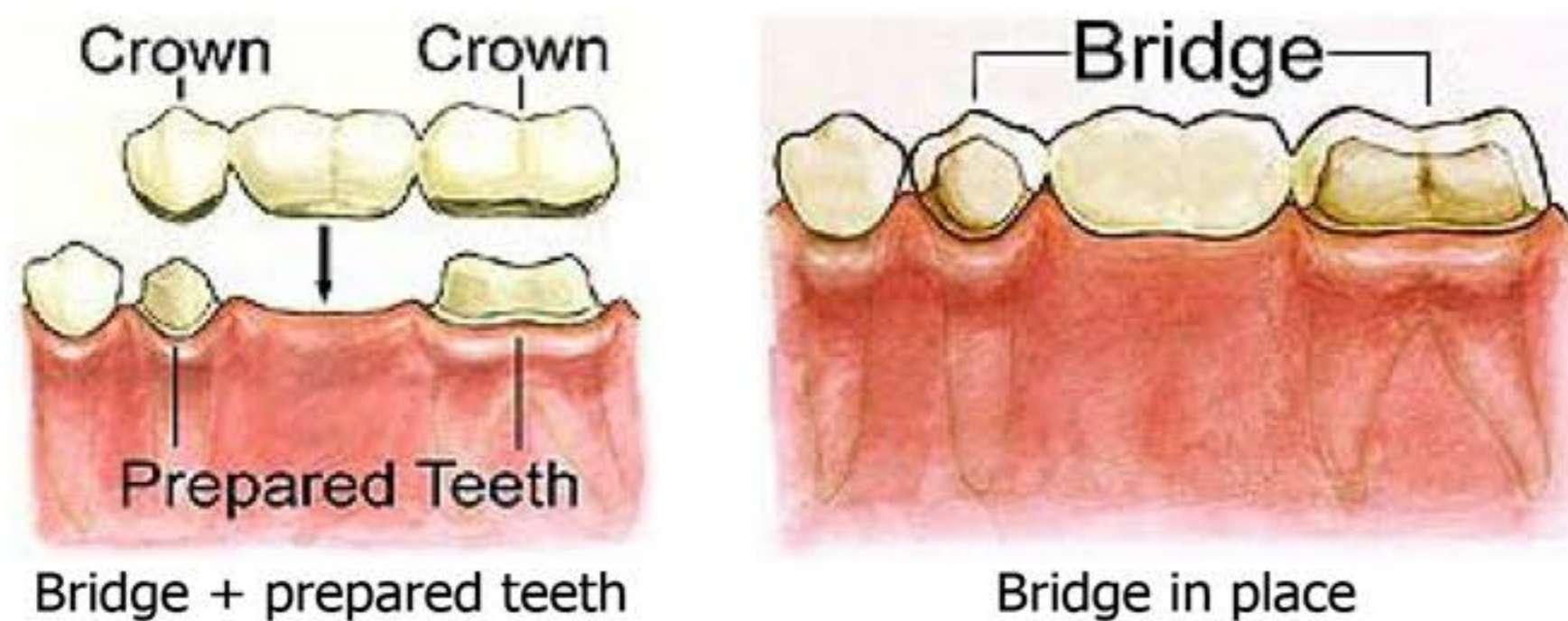
Bridges or Fixed Bridges



1. What is a bridge or fixed bridge?

- A bridge replaces a missing tooth or teeth. It is called a fixed bridge because it is not removable.

A bridge is a structure, supported by teeth on either side of a space. It spans the gap between teeth, just as a bridge spans a river.



2. How is a bridge made?

- The first step is to prepare the supports for the bridge.
- **Replacement crowns** are placed over existing teeth as supports for a bridge.
 - The dentist pares down the teeth on either side of the gap, and takes an **impression** of the prepared teeth.
 - This is then sent to the dental technician where the bridge is made.
 - The technician will make a replacement crown for each prepared tooth.
 - These crowns are joined to an artificial tooth, which replaces the missing tooth.
 - The dentist will then cement the completed bridge over the prepared teeth.



Preparation



New bridge

3. What are replacement crowns?

- A replacement crown does exactly what it claims to do. It replaces part or all of a natural crown of a tooth.
- Replacement crowns for bridges replace the outer coverings of the teeth with caps of metal or porcelain, or a combination of the two materials. They are the supports for the bridge.
- They are joined to artificial teeth, to complete the bridge. The gap between the teeth will now be filled by the bridge.

Bridges or Fixed Bridges



4. How will my pared down teeth be protected until I receive my bridge?

- The dentist will make and install a temporary **acrylic** bridge that will protect the teeth and prevent sensitivity.
- You can eat normally with a temporary bridge. It will also look good.



Preparation



Temporary bridge



New bridge



New bridge in mouth

5. What is the fixed bridge usually made of?

- The base or framework is made of precious or non-precious metal to which tooth coloured **porcelain** is fused.
- Since the development of new stronger ceramic materials, bridges can now be made entirely of porcelain.



Metal + porcelain bridge

Bridges or Fixed Bridges



6. Is the preparation of bridgework painful?

- The procedure is not painful, because a **local anaesthetic** is used during the paring of the teeth, and the taking of the **impression**.
- It is seldom necessary to take an **analgesic** for pain relief after the treatment.

7. Will there be any sensitivity after the bridges are placed in the mouth?

- Sensitivity to hot and cold sometimes occurs after the bridge has been cemented, but this is usually temporary.

8. Will a fixed bridge look good?

- Fixed bridges can be made to look natural and to match the adjoining natural teeth. A bridge in the front of the mouth will restore and even improve the smile.



Preparation



After

9. How well will I be able to chew with a fixed bridge?

- Eating with a fixed bridge should be as comfortable as with natural teeth.
- A bridge is probably the best way of replacing missing teeth.



Before



After

10. Is crowning bad for my teeth?

- Crowning does not usually harm teeth.

Bridges or Fixed Bridges



- The preparation of healthy teeth for crowning is well tolerated.
- There is sometimes a little **sensitivity** to hot and cold, but not for long.
- When decayed teeth are being crowned, the nerve within the tooth may be accidentally injured.
- A **root canal treatment** may then be necessary.

11. How successful are fixed bridges?

- Fixed bridges have been used successfully to replace one or more missing teeth. They can last for many years.

12. Can implants be used to anchor single crowns and bridges?

- "Another option for the replacement of missing teeth is the use of dental **implants**. These are used not only in patients that have lost teeth due to caries and periodontal diseases, but also to restore form and function in patients treated for trauma, cranio-facial cancers, hereditary tooth defects, and other abnormalities." U.S. Surgeon General's Report
- Where there are no natural teeth, implants can be used to anchor or support individual **crowns**. They may also support **bridges**, which can replace several missing teeth.



Implant and crown



Core of implant



Crown on implant



Multiple implants



Bridge on implants

13. What is a Maryland bridge?

- A Maryland bridge functions as a normal bridge but it is not prepared or built like a conventional bridge.
 - The supporting teeth in a Maryland bridge are not prepared as crowns are for a conventional bridge. They are left intact.

Bridges or Fixed Bridges



- The bridge is attached to the outer surfaces of the supporting teeth.
- The replacement tooth in the bridge is attached to metal strips which are bonded or stuck to the supporting teeth.
- This type of bridge is often used as a space maintainer in orthodontic treatment.
- It is usually considered as a temporary bridge.



Before



After



Maryland bridge

14. What role does the dental technician play?

- The dentist sends the **impression** that has been taken of the prepared teeth to the technician.
- The impression is used to make a **cast** of the prepared teeth. A cast is an exact copy of the teeth.
It allows the technician to make a bridge that fits over the prepared teeth.
- The technician will use the same shade/colour guide as the dentist, to ensure that the **bridge** will match the colour of the adjacent teeth.



Cast



The bridge



Bridge on cast
for the dentist