

GLOSSARY OF DENTAL TERMS



A PATIENT'S DENTAL PRIMER

- Amalgam** - Silver filling.
- Bonding** - Method of adhering a filling (amalgam or composite) to a tooth. Uses a white light to harden the material.
- Bridge** - A cemented structure used to replace missing teeth. Composed of several caps soldered together using a pontic to replace the missing tooth.
- Calculus** -Tartar, a hard substance that forms on the teeth. Once formed, it must be professionally removed.
- Composite** - White filling used in front or back teeth.
- Crown** - 1. Same thing as a cap. Can be all metal (either gold or a combination of other metals) or a combination of metal and an esthetic material such as porcelain.
2. The part of the tooth that is visible in the mouth.
- Denture** - A Removable Prosthesis - can be either a full or partial (replaces a few or several teeth) denture. Sometimes called a ' plate '. Should not be confused with a bridge.
- Endodontist** - A dentist that specializes in performing root canal therapy.
- Explorer** - The pointed instrument used during the examination.
- Frenum** - The little piece of tissue which goes from the inside of your lip to the gum tissue just above your front teeth. There is also a frenum which goes from the under surface your tongue to the bottom of your mouth. Frenum are not essential structures and very often need to be removed if they are causing physical or esthetic problems.
- Gingiva** - Gum tissue.
- Inflammation** - Red, sore, puffy bleeding gums tissue. Due to the accumulation of bacteria and lack of required home care.
- Inlay/Onlay** - A type of restoration that replaces a part of the tooth. Can be made of gold, porcelain or resin (plastic).
- Laminate** - A thin porcelain facing (like a fake finger nail) that is bonded to the front of your tooth in order to enhance the esthetics of your smile.
- Nerve** - Found in the center of the root and transmits the feeling of hot and cold to the tooth.
- Orthodontist** - A dentist that specializes in straightening both adult and children's teeth.
- Panoramic** - A type of x-ray that shows your entire jaw (upper and lower) on one film.
- Periodontist** - A dentist that specializes in treating the bone and gum tissue.
- Pocket** -The space between the tooth and the gum.
- Pontic** - Part of a bridge that replaces the missing tooth or teeth.
- Post** - A metal structure that is placed in the root of a tooth after root canal therapy has been done. It is used to support a crown.
- Prophy** - A cleaning usually done by a Hygienist.
- Prosthodontist**- A dentist that specializes in sophisticated restorative dentistry.
- Radiograph** - An X-ray.
- Retraction**
- Cord** - A thin piece of specially prepared string that is placed around your tooth prior to impressioning it for a crown. It is removed prior to cementation of your temporary crowns.
- Root** - The part of the tooth that is held into bone. Can not be seen by the naked eye but can be seen on an X-ray.
- Scaling** - The removal of calculus (tartar) from the teeth.
- Splint** - Connects teeth together when they need support..
- Study Casts** - Plaster models of your mouth used during our diagnosis and treatment planning.
- Temporary** - A plastic crown worn in between visits when a crown is being fabricated. It is only temporarily cemented and can be easily removed at each visit.

We hope that this will clarify some of the terms you have heard so but may not have understood. Knowledge begins with understanding, trust starts with knowledge. If you have any questions regarding this or any other treatment procedure, please feel free to call at any time.