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**VENEERS**

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## **Q. What is a veneer?**

**A.** A veneer is a thin layer of porcelain made to fit over the front surface of a tooth, like a false fingernail fits over a nail. Sometimes a natural-colour 'composite' material is used instead of porcelain.

## **Q. When would I need a veneer?**

**A.** Veneers can improve the colour, shape and position of your teeth. A precise shade of porcelain can be chosen to give the right colour to improve a single discoloured tooth or to lighten your front teeth. A veneer can make a chipped tooth look whole again. The porcelain covers the whole of the front of the tooth, with a thicker section replacing the broken part. Veneers can also be used to close small gaps, when orthodontics (braces) are not suitable. If one tooth is slightly out of position, a veneer can sometimes be fitted to bring it into line with the others.

## **Q. What are the advantages of veneers?**

**A.** Veneers make teeth look natural and healthy. Because they are very thin and are held in place by a special, strong adhesive, very little preparation of the tooth is needed. Some types of veneers don't need any preparation at all.

## **Q. How are teeth prepared for a veneer?**

**A.** Some of the shiny, outer enamel surface of the tooth may be removed, to make sure that the veneer can be bonded permanently in place later. The amount of enamel removed is tiny and will be the same as the thickness of the veneer to be fitted, so that the tooth stays the same size. A local anaesthetic (injection) may be used to make sure that there is no discomfort, but often this is not needed. Once the tooth has been prepared, the dental team will take an 'impression' (mould). This will be given to the dental technician, along with any other information needed to make the veneer. The colour of the surrounding teeth is matched on a shade guide to make sure that the veneer will look entirely natural.



### **Q. How long will it take?**

**A.** A veneer takes at least two visits. The first is to prepare the tooth and match the shade, and the second is to fit it.

Before bonding it in place, your dentist will show you the veneer on your tooth to make sure you are happy with it.

Bonding a veneer in place is done with a special adhesive, which holds it firmly on the tooth.

### **Q. Will I need a temporary veneer between visits?**

**A.** Because the preparation of the tooth is so slight, you will probably not need a temporary veneer. The tooth will look very much the same after preparation, but will feel slightly less smooth.

### **Q. What happens after the veneer is fitted?**

**A.** Only minor adjustments can be made to the veneer after it is fitted. It is usually best to wait a little while to get used to it before any changes are made. Your dental team will probably want to check and polish it a week or so after it is fitted, and make sure that you are happy with it.

### **Q. How much will it cost?**

**A.** The costs for this treatment can vary from practice to practice so it is important to discuss charges and treatment options with your dental team before starting treatment.

### **Q. How long will a veneer last?**

**A.** Veneers should last for many years; but they can chip or break, just like your own teeth can. Your dental team will tell you how long each veneer should last. Small chips can be repaired, or a new veneer fitted if necessary.

### **Q. What about alternatives?**

**A.** A natural-coloured filling material can be used for minor repairs to front teeth. This is excellent when the tooth can support a filling, but may not work so well for broken tooth corners. There will always be a join between the tooth and the filling material. Crowns are used for teeth which need to be strengthened - either because they have broken, have been weakened by a very large filling, or have had root canal treatment.

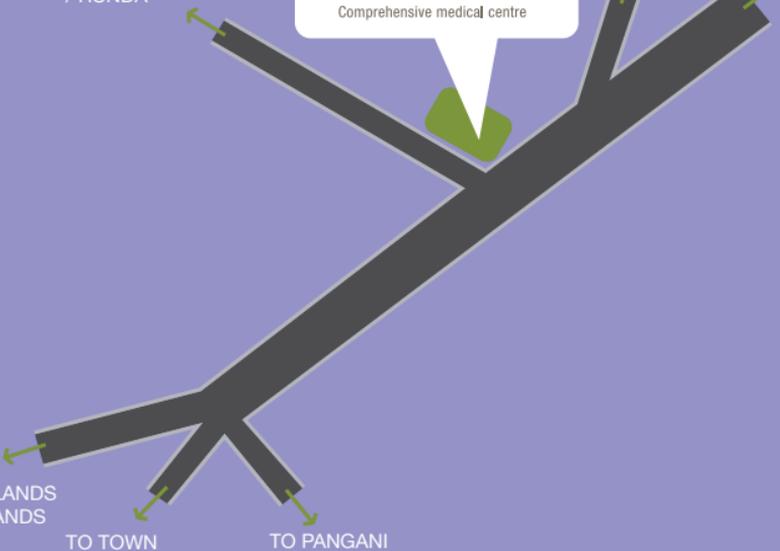
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1st Floor, Oilibya Plaza, Muthaiga.  
P.O.Box 64829-00620, Nairobi, Kenya  
0790 307 260 and 0780 367 367.  
[appointments@applesandsense.com](mailto:appointments@applesandsense.com)