

Stourcote Dental Practice

🏠 160 Lower High Street | Stourbridge | DY8 1TS

☎ 01384 394 215

✉ reception@stourcotedentalpractice.co.uk

🌐 www.stourcotedentalpractice.co.uk

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● All about fillings

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 **Denplan**
At the heart of dental care

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● Looking after your teeth

Remember - you only get one set of adult teeth but by taking good care of your teeth and gums, you're also more likely to keep more of your adult teeth for life. This means that you'll maintain the same ability to eat and drink, and be able to show off a healthy, natural smile.

You can work easily with your dental team to take care of your teeth throughout the whole of your life. Simple things like taking a few minutes of your time everyday to brush and clean between your teeth can really make a difference in reducing the daily damage that can be done to your mouth.

Regular visits to your dental team can then help you to identify any factors that

could place your dental health at risk, allowing you to make small changes to your lifestyle to combat this, and stop dental problems before they start.

Keeping your mouth healthy relies on regular professional advice and guidance, combined with an effective home care routine. This combined preventive approach focuses on keeping teeth and gums healthy for life and reduces the likelihood of needing more expensive, complex, and possibly painful dental treatments or emergency care in the future.

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● All about fillings

Dental fillings are used to restore missing tooth structure by filling the cavity (hole). Typically, the decayed portion of your tooth will be removed and the area filled with the most suitable filling material.

What are the different types of filling?

White fillings have always been considered less long lasting than silver amalgam fillings. But there are now new materials that are almost as good as silver amalgam, and these are proving to be very successful. How long a white filling lasts can depend a lot on where it is in your mouth and how heavily your teeth come together when you bite. Your dentist can tell you how long your fillings should last.

Composite fillings are strong, but may not be as hard wearing as amalgam fillings. Composite fillings are tooth coloured and are made from powdered glass quartz, silica or other ceramic particles added to a resin base. After the tooth is prepared, the filling is bonded onto the area and a light shone onto it to set it. The dentist will choose a shade to match your own teeth, although over time staining can happen.

Amalgam fillings are silver coloured. They are made by combining mercury and a silver alloy (50% mercury, 35% silver, 15% tin, copper and other metals). Amalgam is long lasting and hard wearing and has been used in fillings for at least 150 years. It is economical to use and it is not unusual for an amalgam filling to last 15 to 20 years.

This kind of filling is normally used on the back 'chewing' teeth. Before the filling can be placed, the area must be prepared by removing all the decay and shaping the cavity to hold the filling in place. If the tooth is badly broken, your dentist may need to place a small stainless steel pin to help secure the filling.

Tooth coloured fillings are mainly made of glass particles, synthetic resin and a setting ingredient. Your dentist should be able to give you more information about the material they use.

Glass ionomer fillings form a chemical bond with the tooth. They may also release fluoride, which helps prevent further tooth decay. This type of filling is fairly weak. Because of this, they are usually used on baby teeth and non-biting surfaces, such as around the neck of the tooth. Little preparation is needed as the filling bonds directly to the tooth.

Porcelain inlays. Your dentist can now use computer technology (called CAD/CAM) to design and prepare perfectly fitted porcelain inlays in just one or two visits. Porcelain inlays can also be made in a laboratory, but this will need at least two visits to your dentist. Porcelain can be hard wearing and long lasting, and it can be coloured to match your own teeth. This type of filling can be quite expensive.