



VENEERS

What are veneers?

The word “veneer” is defined as “a thin decorative covering.” In dentistry, veneers are fabricated from two different materials: porcelain or composite. Both are extremely thin: Take a look at the picture. We compare them to the size and shape of a fingernail.



What is the process to get my teeth veneered with porcelain?

First, your dentist will examine your mouth, teeth, and “occlusion.” Occlusion refers to your bite, and how your teeth function with respect to each other. In certain cases, it is VERY important to take impressions and for your dentist to study these models with great intensity, and to also discuss your particular situation with the laboratory.

When the study is complete, the next step is to shape your teeth, take a new impression, put temporary veneers onto your shaped teeth, and send the impression to the laboratory. The lab will need anywhere between one and three weeks to fabricate your veneers.

At the following appointment, your dentist will bond the veneers, and your new smile will be complete!

What is the process to get my teeth veneered with composite?

As with the first step for porcelain veneers, your “occlusion” must be examined and addressed. When everything is acceptable, your composite veneers can be started!

Unlike porcelain veneers, composite veneers can be accomplished directly in the dental office. “Composite” is the same material used for “white fillings,” but the process is more involved due to layering, intense shaping, and high polishing. Depending upon the number of veneers desired, the process can be accomplished in one to two appointments: since all patients are different, you’ll have to talk to your dentist about your individual time-frame.

Which material should I choose: porcelain or composite?

Traditionally, porcelain has been the more common material because composites have not been able to provide results as beautiful as porcelain. However, that has significantly changed over the last few years, and today it is difficult to distinguish between the two materials.

Although porcelain veneers are typically problem-free, occasionally they pop off or chip. This can cause patients inconvenience and embarrassment, and then emergency visits to the dentist are required. A popped-off porcelain veneer can usually be rebonded, but chips are extremely difficult to repair, if not

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impossible. Composite veneers don't pop off like porcelain veneers, and if they do chip, they can be easily repaired.

Another huge difference between porcelain and composite veneers is the laboratory and temporization. With porcelain, a laboratory must fabricate the veneers, and occasionally they don't fit correctly! This is HUGELY stressful for both the patient and doctor, since new impressions, temporaries, lab time, and more visits are required. Also, with porcelain veneers the teeth must be temporized for one to three weeks, and occasionally these temporaries can break leading to more emergency visits. With composite, there are no impressions, no laboratories, and no temporaries.

If I get veneers, how long can I expect them to last?

This is highly variable since people subject their teeth to stimuli with varying degrees:

- intensity and amount of clenching and grinding
- placing objects between their teeth such as pins, nails, pencils
- staining foods such as coffee, tea, chocolate and medications
- diet: foods that require more tearing or harder chewing will cause more stress than softer foods.

Typically, veneers should last between 7 and 15 years.

What type of maintenance and care is needed?

- Daily brushing, flossing, and rinsing is required.
- A DENTIST-made nightguard is a necessity: store-bought mouthguards can cause damage!!!
- Regular dental check-ups are necessary: typically every 6 months.

Daily care and regular checkups are necessary to help prevent decay (cavities) from forming, allow for early detection and treatment of cavities (before they get too large), and to help remove stain build-up.

A word about "occlusion:"

In an ideal mouth, all teeth (front and back) touch evenly when a person bites down. When the teeth slide in ANY direction (left, right, or outwards), back teeth do not touch: just the front teeth. And not only do the front teeth touch, but they touch evenly and only on the side you are sliding towards. If a person does not have this "ideal" set-up, restorations such as veneers can be susceptible to regular fracture and excessive wear.

This is the reason why an experienced, caring dentist will take the time to study your occlusion BEFORE starting cosmetic treatment such as veneers. So just keep in mind that when you seek consultations from multiple dentists, you will have varying opinions. But watch out for those that promise you quick treatment without studying your occlusion!!!!

Please refer to the "Occlusion" information sheet for more details on this extremely important subject.

What would a section on veneers be without photos? This is an actual case completed by Dr. Goldberg.

