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Crown (Cap) Home Care Instructions

At times the dental restoration of choice for children is a cap (crown). A crown restoration encircles and covers all surfaces of your child's tooth. A crown is generally the strongest restoration that can be provided for your child. We are providing you with some instructions on how to care for this type of dental restoration in order to maintain a functioning and healthy dentition for your child.

The gum tissue surrounding your child's crown may be red, inflamed, bleed easily, and sore immediately after placement of the crown. This is normal at this time and may persist for 7- 10 days after crown placement. Keep the area clean with regular brushing and flossing. Whitish material (dental plaque) should be removed with brushing. The gums may bleed initially. This is normal, and brushing should not be discontinued if this occurs. If this whitish material (plaque) is left on the sides of the crown, it will cause gum inflammation (infection).

While crowns are one of the strongest restorations, nothing is stronger than an undecayed natural tooth. Crowns are not able to withstand the forces of biting on non-food items such as anything made of plastic, wood, or metal. Have your child avoid biting on all non-food items. Crowns will also not withstand the forces of trauma from a fall or blow to the face and/or dentition.

All crowns are either bonded or cemented onto the existing tooth. This bond or cement is strong, but if hard, sticky, or chewy foods/candy are eaten the crown may be dislodged. In order to avoid this from occurring, it is recommended to have your child avoid the following foods/candy: gummy bears, Jolly Ranchers, hard candies, salt water taffy, chewing gum, caramels, suckers, fruit roll-ups, corn nuts, beef jerky, raw carrots or ice.

Baby (primary) teeth with crown restorations will be lost in the same way that other baby teeth are lost when the permanent tooth replacing them dissolves the root enough for them to be lost. There are no special concerns if the baby tooth with a crown is lost due to the eruption of a permanent tooth.

If your child grinds his/her teeth excessively, a hole can be worn through a crown which could lead to decay and/or the loss of the crown. If you notice a hole in your child's crown, bring it to the dentist's attention.

If your child's crown is loose or has come off, call the office immediately. Many times, a loose crown can be recemented, if your child is treated immediately. If your child's crown is off, store it in a plastic baggy and bring it into the office immediately. Delay in seeking treatment could lead to need for a new crown, decay, or loss of the tooth.