# Dental Crowns and Bridges at Core Dental Carrum Downs

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## Description:

# Dental Crowns and Bridges at Core Dental Carrum Downs *Restoring damaged, weakened, and missing teeth with precision-crafted crowns and bridges — including same-day CEREC options — right here on Ba...

## Details:

*Restoring damaged, weakened, and missing teeth with precision-crafted crowns and bridges — including same-day CEREC options — right here on Ballarto Road.*

## When a Filling Isn't Enough

There comes a point in the life of a damaged tooth when a filling simply isn't sufficient. Perhaps the decay is too extensive. Perhaps the tooth has cracked. Perhaps a previous large filling has weakened the remaining tooth structure to the point where it's at risk of fracturing. Perhaps a root canal has left the tooth brittle and in need of protection.

This is where dental crowns come in. A crown — sometimes called a "cap" — is a custom-made restoration that covers the entire visible portion of a tooth above the gumline, restoring its shape, strength, appearance, and function. It's one of the most versatile and reliable treatments in dentistry, and at Core Dental Carrum Downs, it's one of our most frequently performed procedures.

For patients who are missing one or more teeth, bridges offer a proven solution — using crowns on adjacent teeth to support a replacement tooth (or teeth) that spans the gap. And with our CEREC same-day crown technology, many patients can have a permanent crown designed, milled, and fitted in a single visit.

## Understanding Dental Crowns

### What Is a Crown?

A dental crown is a tooth-shaped "cap" that is permanently cemented over a damaged or weakened tooth. It completely encases the visible portion of the tooth from the gumline up, effectively becoming the tooth's new outer surface. A well-made crown is virtually indistinguishable from a natural tooth — matched in colour, shape, and translucency to blend seamlessly with your smile.

### When Is a Crown Needed?

Crowns are recommended in a variety of situations:

- **Extensive decay:** When a cavity is too large for a filling to reliably restore the tooth - **Cracked or fractured tooth:** To hold the tooth together and prevent the crack from progressing - **After root canal treatment:** Root-canal-treated teeth become brittle over time and are prone to fracture. A crown protects the weakened tooth - **Large existing fillings:** When a tooth has more filling than natural tooth structure, a crown provides structural reinforcement - **Worn-down teeth:** From grinding

(bruxism), acid erosion, or age-related wear - **Cosmetic improvement:** To improve the appearance of a severely discoloured, misshapen, or poorly formed tooth - **On top of a dental implant:** To replace the visible portion of a missing tooth - **As an anchor for a bridge:** Crowns on either side of a gap support the replacement tooth

### Crown Materials

Modern dental crowns are available in several materials, each with different strengths:

**Porcelain (ceramic) crowns** The most aesthetic option. All-porcelain crowns are made entirely from ceramic material, providing excellent colour matching and natural translucency. They're ideal for front teeth and visible areas where appearance is paramount. Modern ceramics are also strong enough for most back teeth.

**Porcelain-fused-to-metal (PFM) crowns** These crowns have a metal substructure covered with porcelain. They combine the strength of metal with the aesthetics of porcelain. They're very durable but can sometimes show a dark line at the gumline if the gum recedes.

**Zirconia crowns** Zirconia is an extremely strong ceramic material that offers excellent durability and good aesthetics. It's particularly popular for back teeth where biting forces are greatest, though modern zirconia can also produce very natural-looking results for front teeth.

**Gold and metal alloy crowns** While less common today due to aesthetic concerns, metal crowns are the strongest and most durable option. They require minimal tooth reduction and are exceptionally long-lasting. Some patients still prefer them for back teeth where they're not visible.

Your dentist will recommend the most appropriate material based on the tooth's location, the biting forces it needs to withstand, your aesthetic preferences, and your budget.

## The Traditional Crown Process

### Appointment 1: Preparation

Your dentist prepares the tooth by removing a thin layer of enamel from all surfaces to create room for the crown. The amount removed depends on the crown material — porcelain crowns typically require slightly more reduction than metal crowns.

After preparation: - A precise impression or digital scan of the prepared tooth and surrounding teeth is taken - The shade (colour) of the crown is carefully selected to match your natural teeth - A temporary crown is fabricated and cemented to protect the prepared tooth while the permanent crown is being made

The impression is sent to a dental laboratory where skilled technicians craft your permanent crown to exact specifications.

### Between Appointments

The laboratory typically takes one to two weeks to fabricate your crown. During this time, your temporary crown protects the prepared tooth. Temporary crowns are functional but not as strong or precise as the final crown — avoid sticky foods and hard chewing on that side.

### Appointment 2: Fitting

When your permanent crown is ready, you'll return for the fitting appointment. Your dentist will: - Remove the temporary crown - Try in the permanent crown, checking the fit, bite, and colour match - Make any necessary adjustments - Permanently cement the crown once everything is perfect

The result is a restoration that looks, feels, and functions like a natural tooth.

## CEREC Same-Day Crowns: One Visit, Done

At Core Dental Carrum Downs, we also offer CEREC (Chairside Economical Restoration of Esthetic Ceramics) technology, which allows us to design, mill, and fit a permanent porcelain crown in a single appointment.

### How CEREC Works

1. **Digital scan:** Instead of messy traditional impressions, we take a precise 3D digital scan of your tooth using an intraoral camera 2. **Computer-aided design:** The scan data is used to design your crown on screen, with your dentist customising the shape, contour, and bite to match your natural teeth 3. **Milling:** The design is sent to our on-site milling unit, which carves the crown from a solid block of high-quality ceramic — right here in the practice, while you wait 4. **Fitting:** The freshly milled crown is tried in, adjusted if needed, polished, and permanently cemented

**Total time:** Approximately 60–90 minutes from start to finish.

### Advantages of CEREC

- **One appointment:** No temporary crown, no second visit, no time off work - **No messy impressions:** Digital scanning is faster, more comfortable, and more accurate - **High-quality ceramic:** CEREC uses blocks of premium ceramic that are strong, aesthetic, and biocompatible - **Precision:** Computer-aided design and milling produce crowns with excellent fit and accuracy - **Immediate result:** You walk in with a damaged tooth and walk out with a permanent crown

### Is CEREC Right for Every Crown?

CEREC is suitable for most crown situations, but there are some cases where a laboratory-made crown may be preferred — for example, complex cases requiring layered porcelain for optimal aesthetics on front teeth, or when a crown material other than ceramic is indicated. Your dentist will recommend the best approach for your specific situation.

## Understanding Dental Bridges

### What Is a Bridge?

A dental bridge literally "bridges" the gap left by one or more missing teeth. A traditional bridge consists of one or more replacement teeth (called pontics) held in place by crowns on the teeth on either side of the gap (called abutment teeth).

### When Is a Bridge Recommended?

A bridge may be recommended when: - One or more adjacent teeth are missing - The teeth on either side of the gap are strong enough to support a bridge - You want a fixed (non-removable) replacement for missing teeth - Dental implants are not suitable or preferred

### Types of Bridges

**Traditional bridge** The most common type. Crowns are placed on the teeth on either side of the gap, with a replacement tooth (or teeth) suspended between them. Requires preparation (reduction) of the abutment teeth.

**Cantilever bridge** Similar to a traditional bridge, but the replacement tooth is supported by a crown on only one side. Used when there are natural teeth on only one side of the gap.

**Maryland bridge (resin-bonded bridge)** A conservative option where the replacement tooth is supported by metal or porcelain "wings" that are bonded to the backs of adjacent teeth. Less tooth reduction is required, but this type is generally only suitable for front teeth where biting forces are lower.

**Implant-supported bridge** Instead of using natural teeth as anchors, this bridge is supported by dental implants. This is an excellent option when multiple adjacent teeth are missing, as it doesn't

require modification of natural teeth and provides the stability and bone-preserving benefits of implants.

### The Bridge Process

The process for a traditional bridge is similar to a crown:

1. **Preparation:** The abutment teeth are prepared (reduced) to accommodate crowns 2. **Impressions:** Precise impressions or digital scans are taken 3. **Temporary bridge:** A temporary bridge is placed while the permanent one is fabricated 4. **Fitting:** The permanent bridge is tried in, adjusted, and cemented

### Caring for Your Bridge

Bridges require specific attention to oral hygiene, particularly in the area underneath the pontic (replacement tooth) where it sits against the gum. Special floss threaders, interdental brushes, or water flossers are used to clean underneath the bridge. Your dentist will show you the most effective cleaning technique for your specific bridge.

## Choosing Between a Crown, an Onlay, and a Large Filling

Not every damaged tooth needs a crown. The right restoration depends on how much healthy tooth structure remains:

- **Filling:** Best for small to moderate cavities where the majority of the tooth is still intact. The filling material bonds within the cavity, restoring shape and function. - **Inlay or onlay:** A conservative middle ground. Inlays fit within the cusps (points) of the tooth, while onlays cover one or more cusps. They provide more protection than a filling but preserve more natural tooth than a crown. CEREC technology makes these feasible in a single visit. - **Crown:** Appropriate when a significant portion of the tooth is damaged, weakened, or has been previously restored with large fillings. The crown encases the entire visible tooth, providing structural reinforcement.

Our dentists will always recommend the most conservative option that will reliably protect the tooth long-term. We'd rather place a well-made onlay than an unnecessary crown — preserving your natural tooth structure wherever possible.

## What Happens If a Crown or Bridge Fails?

Crowns and bridges don't last forever, but most failures are manageable:

- **Loose crown:** A crown that has become loose or detached can often be re-cemented if it's still intact and the underlying tooth is healthy. Keep the crown if it comes off and bring it to your appointment. - **Decay under a crown:** Secondary decay can develop at the margins where the crown meets the tooth, particularly if oral hygiene has been inconsistent. If caught early, the crown can sometimes be replaced on the same tooth. If the decay is extensive, additional treatment (or extraction) may be needed. - **Cracked porcelain:** Minor chips can sometimes be polished smooth. Larger fractures typically require crown replacement. - **Bridge failure:** If an abutment tooth develops problems, the entire bridge may need to be removed and replaced. In some cases, the failed bridge is replaced with implant-supported solutions.

Regular check-ups are your best defence — your dentist monitors every crown and bridge at each visit, catching problems when they're small and manageable.

## How Long Do Crowns and Bridges Last?

With proper care, dental crowns typically last 10–15 years, and many last significantly longer. Bridges have a similar lifespan. Factors that affect longevity include:

- **Oral hygiene:** Good brushing and flossing habits protect the margins where the crown meets the tooth - **Bite forces:** Grinding or clenching can wear down or damage crowns and bridges - **Diet:**

Habits like chewing ice, biting hard objects, or opening packages with teeth can cause damage - **Material:** Different materials have different wear characteristics - **Underlying tooth health:** The health of the tooth underneath the crown affects the restoration's longevity

Regular dental check-ups are essential — your dentist monitors your crowns and bridges at every visit, checking for signs of wear, loosening, or secondary decay around the margins.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Does getting a crown hurt?

The tooth is numbed with local anaesthesia before any preparation begins, so the procedure itself is pain-free. After the anaesthesia wears off, some mild sensitivity is normal for a few days, particularly to temperature. This typically resolves quickly. For CEREC same-day crowns, the entire process is completed while the tooth is numb, so there's no gap where you might experience discomfort with a temporary.

### How do I know if I need a crown or just a filling?

Your dentist will assess the extent of damage or decay and recommend the most appropriate and conservative option. As a general rule, if more than half the tooth's biting surface is compromised, or if the tooth is at risk of fracturing, a crown provides better long-term protection than a filling. We always explain our reasoning and discuss alternatives.

### Can a crowned tooth still get a cavity?

The crown itself can't decay, but the natural tooth underneath it can. Decay most commonly occurs at the margin where the crown meets the tooth, which is why good oral hygiene (particularly flossing around crowned teeth) is essential. Regular check-ups allow us to detect any early signs of decay at the margins.

### Will my crown look natural?

Yes. Modern crown materials — particularly all-ceramic and zirconia options — are designed to mimic the colour, translucency, and surface characteristics of natural teeth. We carefully shade-match every crown to your surrounding teeth. Most people cannot tell the difference between a well-made crown and a natural tooth.

## Crowns for Teeth After Root Canal Treatment

One of the most common reasons for needing a crown is following root canal treatment. During a root canal, the nerve and blood supply of the tooth are removed, which saves the tooth from extraction but leaves it more brittle over time. Without the nourishment from its blood supply, the tooth becomes prone to fracture — particularly under the biting forces of everyday chewing.

A crown protects a root-canal-treated tooth by encasing it entirely, distributing biting forces across the whole crown rather than concentrating them on the weakened tooth structure. This is why your dentist will almost always recommend a crown after root canal treatment, especially for back teeth that bear significant chewing forces.

With our CEREC technology, the crown can often be placed on the same day as the root canal is completed (or very shortly after), eliminating the vulnerable period with a temporary crown and reducing the overall number of appointments needed. This integrated approach — root canal treatment followed by immediate permanent crown — is one of the key benefits of having CEREC technology available in our Carrum Downs practice.

## Crown and Bridge Costs

The cost of crowns and bridges depends on several factors: - The material chosen (ceramic, zirconia, PFM, gold) - Whether CEREC same-day technology is used - The number of teeth involved (for bridges) - The complexity of the case

We provide detailed, itemised treatment plans with clear costs before any work begins. You'll know exactly what your investment will be and can make an informed decision.

### Payment Options

- **Health fund:** We accept all major health funds with HICAPS on-site. Crowns and bridges are typically covered under the "major dental" category of most extras policies. - **Payright:** Interest-free payment plans are available for larger treatments, making quality restorations accessible without financial strain. - **Transparent pricing:** No hidden fees. The price quoted is the price you pay.

## Your Team

Our general dentists — Dr Tristan Balthazaar, Dr Amreen Hussain, Dr Ivy Jin, Dr Payal Thatikonda, and Dr Anna Lai — all have extensive experience in crown and bridge work. Their skills are complemented by our use of trusted dental laboratories and the latest in-practice technology, including CEREC for same-day restorations.

For complex cases requiring specialist prosthodontic input, we can refer seamlessly to the Smile Solutions Specialist Centre on Collins Street — with records transferring directly and no disruption to your care.

## Book Your Consultation

If you have a damaged, weakened, or missing tooth that needs attention, book a consultation at Core Dental Carrum Downs. We'll assess your situation, explain your options clearly, and recommend the best approach for a lasting, natural-looking result.

**Core Dental Carrum Downs** 335 Ballarto Rd, Carrum Downs VIC 3201

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**Hours:** Monday – Friday: 8:00 am – 6:00 pm Saturday: 8:00 am – 1:30 pm Sunday: Closed

Ground-floor, fully disability accessible. Ample on-site parking. Same-day CEREC crowns available. All health funds accepted with HICAPS. Interest-free payment plans through Payright.

*Restore, protect, and strengthen — expert crowns and bridges at Core Dental Carrum Downs.*