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| Q. What are amalgam fillings? |
| A. Amalgam or silver fillings are the metal coloured fillings that many people have. Amalgam was the traditional material used for fillings for many years. |
| Q. Why should I consider white fillings? |
| A. Most people have dental fillings. Fillings should not only be functional, but also natural looking. Many people don’t want silver fillings that show when they laugh or smile. |
| Q. Can I get them on the NHS? |
| A. The National Health Service will not usually allow white fillings on the biting surfaces of back teeth. However, this does not apply to the sides of back teeth or to any front teeth. |
| Q. Can I be allergic to amalgam fillings? |
| A. Allergic reactions to amalgam fillings are extremely rare. Symptoms of amalgam allergy are similar to those experienced in a typical skin allergy and include skin rashes and itching. Once an allergy is confirmed, another restorative material can be used. |
| Q. Are they expensive? |
| A. Costs usually depend on the size and type of white filling used, and the time it takes to carry out the treatment. Your dentist will be able to give you an idea of the cost before you agree to treatment. |
| Q. Are they as good as silver amalgam fillings? |
| A. White fillings have always been considered to not last as long than silver 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 about how long your fillings should last. |
| Q. Is it worth replacing my amalgam fillings with white ones? |
| A. It is usually best to change fillings only when your dentist decides your old filling needs replacing. If so you can ask to have it replaced in a tooth-coloured material. |
| Q. What are tooth-coloured fillings made of? |
| A. It can vary, but they 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.  |
| Q. Where can I get them done? |
| A. Most dental practices offer white fillings as a normal part of the treatment they give you.  |
| Q. Are there any alternatives to fillings? |
| A. There are alternatives such as crowns and inlays although they can cost a lot more. Veneers can be used on front teeth instead of crowns or fillings. |