

# Crowning a Cracked Tooth

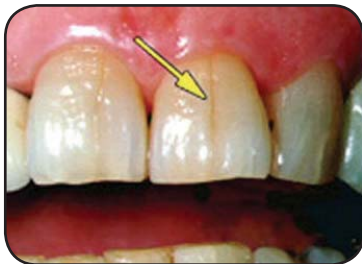
When a tooth is cracked, it's often best to protect the tooth by placing a crown to protect the tooth and prevent it from breaking.

## Symptoms of a cracked tooth

You may have a cracked tooth if you experience any of these symptoms:

- ❖ Your tooth is sensitive to hot or cold temperatures or to sweet or sour foods.
- ❖ You sometimes feel a sharp pain when you chew.
- ❖ The pain is intermittent rather than constant.

Some teeth look cracked, but may not be a problem. One kind of hairline crack, called a "craze," occurs over time in the enamel layer of the tooth, and it may not require immediate treatment.



*Tooth with a hairline crack*



*Cracked tooth*



*Placing a crown*

## Diagnosis and treatment

We recommend that you see us for an exam if you think you have a cracked tooth, even if it doesn't hurt. The exam typically includes x-rays. However, x-rays don't always reveal a crack, so we may also analyze your bite to isolate the problem.

There are several types of crowns, including gold, porcelain fused to metal, and porcelain. If your tooth needs a crown, we'll talk with you about the best kind for your situation.

It's important to evaluate and treat cracks as soon as possible because they can grow quickly. If a crack reaches the tooth's nerve, bacteria can infect the tooth, and root canal therapy may be required to save it. If the crack extends to the root, the tooth may need to be extracted.

To prevent a cracked tooth from breaking and to seal out bacteria and infection, we often recommend placing a crown over the tooth.