

Dental bonding: Three easy steps to a Beautiful Smile

By Dr. Melanie Rabeni

Dental bonding is a common procedure that a cosmetic dentist can use to help repair chipped teeth and correct for other minor defects on a tooth. The process is painless and can normally be completed in a single office visit. The improvements possible with dental bonding can have a dramatic impact on the look of a tooth and offers the patient a permanent fix that can last a lifetime.

There are basically three steps to dental bonding and it all starts with preparing to tooth for the procedure. The surface of the tooth is delicately roughed up with a dental handpiece to provide an easier surface for adhesion of the bonding material. Since this is only done to the surface of the tooth, sometimes there is no need for anesthesia. Once the enamel layer is removed in the area of the tooth that needs repair, a preparation liquid is used to coat the surface. This liquid will help seal the surface and form a tighter bond with the resin.

The next step involves the application of a synthetic resin to the tooth. This resin has the consistency of putty when applied, which allows the cosmetic dentist to mold it as needed for repairing the tooth. Unlike other materials, the resin will stay in this flexible shape for as long as the dentist needs to complete the repair. This placement of the resin is done to roughly approximate the shape and size of the desired tooth and will be refined later once hardened. The color of this resin is also carefully chosen to match the rest of the tooth being repaired and will blend in perfectly once the process is completed.

After the resin has been applied as needed, it is then cured through the use of an ultraviolet light. The resin is exposed to this light for a short period of time and hardens to its final state. This curing process will also bond the resin to the underlying tooth to ensure it stays in place for the patient. Once this resin is cured, the cosmetic dentist will then make the final adjustments needed to the repaired tooth's shape and size. These adjustments involve the shaping of this resin with a dental handpiece to mimic the tooth being repaired. This part of the process take the most amount of time as it is exacting work that will ultimately determine the final shape of the tooth. The dentist will do their best to adjust this tooth to fit in well with the other teeth surrounding it and will also make sure there is adequate spacing between the teeth for proper cleaning.

The main advantage to dental bonding over other options is how quickly the repair can be made to a chipped tooth. In most cases the entire procedure can be completed in a single office visit and the repaired tooth will look perfect. The disadvantages to this procedure include staining. Because the dental bonding resin is synthetic, it has the potential to stain under certain conditions. While this

staining can be minimized through regular cleanings and changes to your diet, it can be a problem for some people. Other than this one drawback, dental bonding provides an easy and permanent way to repair your chipped or broken teeth that will have you smiling again in no time at all.

Dr. Melanie Rabeni owns Rabeni Dental in Plymouth, MA. For the latest information on how to create a beautiful smile through cosmetic dentistry, visit www.rabenidental.com.

This article may be freely reprinted or distributed in its entirety in any e-zine, newsletter, blog, or website. The author's name, bio and website links must remain intact and be included with every reproduction.