

Inlays and Onlays

You have a big filling that needs replacement. Do you have to get a full crown? Not necessarily. A more conservative option—inlays and onlays—fit into a tooth similarly to a filling, yet they are milled restorations, much like a crown. The bumps on top of a tooth are called cusps. Inlays fit between cusps, while onlays fit over one or more cusps. Inlays and onlays allow a patient to retain more natural tooth structure, which is always best.

Not every situation is right for an inlay or onlay, but Dr. Arima will assess your problem and determine the best solution for you. Because they are created in a lab like a crown, inlays and onlays **require two appointments**. At the first visit, we will prepare your tooth by removing your tooth decay or old filling and cleaning the area. We will take a dental impression and send it to our dental lab so that a technician can create a custom inlay or onlay for you. Dr. Arima will determine the best material to use, but in most cases, teeth that show when you smile or speak can have a white restoration. Back teeth incur extreme pressure, so a metal inlay or onlay may be indicated. You'll wear a temporary until the lab delivers your final restoration.

At the second appointment, Dr. Arima will remove your temporary and permanently cement your final inlay or onlay into position. After polishing and modifying the restoration as necessary to ensure proper bite alignment, you'll enjoy your stronger, healthier smile for years to come.