



Outstanding care
every time

NHS

St George's University Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Stainless Steel Crowns (SSCs)

Patient Information Leaflet

This leaflet explains more about Stainless Steel Crowns (SSCs).

If you have any further questions, please speak to the dentist looking after your child.

What is a Stainless Steel Crown?

Stainless steel crowns (SSCs) are metal crowns made of stainless steel, nickel and chrome. They are used to restore back teeth (molars) that are decayed, broken down and / or which never formed correctly in the first place. They come pre-made in different sizes and cover the entire surface of the tooth's crown. The dentist will choose the right one for your child's tooth and will cement it in place.

Why do we use them?

SSCs are more likely to last the lifetime of the baby tooth than other filling materials put in large cavities. They protect the entire crown of the tooth from further decay / break down and will fall out with the baby teeth they cover when the latter become wobbly. This helps to maintain the natural spacing of teeth and guidance of the adult teeth to come into place in later years. They are not suitable if the decay / breakdown is too deep or extensive in the tooth – such teeth typically need to be removed from the mouth.

What do they look like?

Silver coloured SSCs that protect the whole surface of the tooth



Placed on baby molars at the back of the mouth

How are they placed on the tooth?

There are different ways of placing SSCs. The tooth may or may not be cleaned and / or shaped prior to the SSC being 'seated' over the tooth. It may involve numbing of the tooth with a local anaesthetic.

How SSCs are placed may depend on your child's ability to cope with dental treatment. Once seated, the crown may feel a little 'tight' to begin with and your child might find that they are biting slightly differently to before. In a growing child the mouth adapts quickly to this, so your child will adapt quickly to their new SSC.

The dentist will advise you if painkillers may help and of any other precautions to take e.g. being careful not to bite / burn the numb lip if local anaesthetic was used.

How long do they last?

The SSC lasts the lifetime of the baby tooth on which it is placed. So, when the baby tooth falls out, the SSC falls out with it. Occasionally they need to be replaced and sometimes the top part of the SSC can wear away.

How do I look after them?

SSCs need to be looked after just like normal teeth. This means they need to be brushed twice a day and special attention needs to be paid to the area in between where two teeth meet.



Pay extra attention to cleaning in-between the crowns, where they touch other teeth. This can be done with floss, or by you helping your child brush in this area.

What now?

A treatment plan will be formulated with your Dentist at today's appointment and we encourage you to ask any more questions you may have.

Moving forward, it's really important that your child attends for regular check-ups at their dentist and that their mouth is kept as clean as possible in order to prevent further problems from arising.

The contents of this leaflet have been adapted for use with permission from the Department of Paediatric Dentistry at Guy's & St Thomas' NHS Trust.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about SSCs, please contact the paediatric dental team on 020 8672 1255 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm).

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit www.stgeorges.nhs.uk

Additional services

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can offer you on-the-spot advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or the care you have received. You can visit the PALS office between 9.30am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday in the main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough wings (near the lift foyer).

Tel: 020 8725 2453 **Email:** pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk

NHS Choices

NHS Choices provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make decisions about your health.

Web: www.nhs.uk

NHS 111

You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

Tel: 111

AccessAble

You can download accessibility guides for all of our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website (www.accessable.co.uk).

The guides are designed to ensure everyone – including those with accessibility needs – can access our hospital and community sites with confidence.



Reference: DEN_SSC_01 **Published:** February 2019 **Review date:** February 2021