

STRUCTURALLY COMPROMISED TOOTH

A structurally compromised tooth is a term used to describe a tooth that has been weakened by the loss of a significant amount of tooth structure.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What causes a tooth to be structurally compromised?

- A large cavity or a large existing filling. (Figure 1 and 3)
- A broken tooth involving a large portion of the tooth.
- Teeth with root canal treatment, where the removal of tooth structure required to complete the root canal treatment, significantly weakens the tooth.



Figure 1. Large cavity.

2. What is the risk of having a structurally compromised tooth?

- The loss of a significant amount of tooth structure weakens the tooth, making it easier to break. (Figure 4)
- It can lead to cracks forming in the teeth, which may increase the risk of root canal treatment or possible tooth loss. (Figure 2)



Figure 2. Crack forming in the tooth.

3. What is the treatment for a structurally compromised tooth?

- A large filling will repair a damaged tooth and seal it against cavities, but will not protect the tooth from breaking.
- Your dentist may recommend a crown, which will not only seal it against cavities, but also protect the tooth from breaking by covering the existing tooth.



Figure 3. Large filling.

4. What will happen if I choose to do nothing about my structurally compromised tooth?

- There is a greater risk that the tooth will fracture, possibly requiring removal of the tooth.
- There is an increased risk for root canal treatment.



Figure 4. Weakened tooth.

Dr. _____ has explained to me that the following teeth:

_____ are structurally compromised.

I have read and understand the risks presented in this consent form. I have had any additional questions answered by my dentist.

Patient signature _____ Date _____

Patient print _____

Witness signature _____ Date _____

Witness print _____

Dentist signature _____ Date _____