CRACKED-TOOTH SYNDROME

You may have a very common problem in one of your teeth.

Teeth may crack when subjected to stress of chewing hard foods or ice or by biting on an unexpected hard object. Teeth with or without restorations may exhibit this problem, but teeth restored with typical silver alloy restorations are most susceptible. Silver fillings do nothing to strengthen a tooth, and actually create stresses in the enamel tooth structure holding the filling in place due to expansion and contraction forces as a result of temperature changes. The larger the silver filling, the weaker the enamel because the enamel will have thinner vertical walls. Older persons have more cracked teeth than younger people.

SYMPTOMS AND SIGNS OF A CRACKED TOOTH ARE SOME OR ALL OF THE FOLLOWING:

1. Pain on chewing.
2. Pain on cold-air application.
3. Unsolicited pain (usually leakage of sugar into tooth crack).
5. No dental decay present.
6. Easy verification of crack when tooth is prepared for restoration.

TREATMENT OF CRACKED TEETH:

SIMPLE CRACK: The majority of cracked teeth (about 9 out of 10) can be treated by placement of a simple crown (cap) on the tooth. When the tooth is prepared for the crown and a temporary restoration is placed, the pain usually leaves immediately. If this is the case with your tooth, we will place the final crown without a problem on your next appointment. The condition should then be solved.

COMPLEX CRACK: Occasionally (about 1 in 10) the tooth cracks into the pulp (nerve) of the tooth. If pain persists after placement of the temporary crown, you may have a crack into the pulp of the affected tooth. Please call us if you have these symptoms after the tooth is restored. This tooth may require endodontics (root canal therapy) before or after the crown is placed.

Los Alamitos Dental Care

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