

PATIENT INFORMATION · COSMETIC DENTISTRY

# Crown lengthening

Reshaping the gum, and sometimes a little bone, to expose more of a tooth.

## What is it?

Crown lengthening is a surgical procedure that reshapes gum tissue, and sometimes a little bone, to expose more of a tooth. It is mainly used when a tooth needs a crown or bridge but too little tooth shows above the gum to hold it. It can also be done to change the look of a “gummy” smile. In some cases the Fotona LightWalker laser can be used instead of a scalpel for the gum work.

## Who it may help

- ✓ A broken or decayed tooth with too little showing above the gum for a crown
- ✓ People concerned about a gummy smile
- ✓ Uneven gum lines

Suitability depends on your individual situation and is confirmed after an examination.

## How it works



**1** Too little tooth shows above the gum to hold a crown, or the gum covers much of the tooth.



**2** The area is numbed, then gum and sometimes a little bone are reshaped.



**3** The gum heals at its new level over several weeks.



**4** A crown can then be fitted to the exposed tooth.

Simplified illustration, not to scale. Your own treatment may differ.

## What to expect

- 1 Planning.** An examination and X-rays are used to plan the procedure.
- 2 Numbing.** The area is numbed with local anaesthetic.
- 3 Reshaping.** The gum is gently moved back and reshaped, and sometimes a small amount of bone is removed. The laser may be used in some cases.
- 4 Stitches.** The gum is stitched in place; sometimes a dressing is placed.
- 5 Healing.** The gum takes several weeks to a few months to settle before a crown is fitted.

## Risks to discuss with your dentist

- **Healing time:** the gum can take weeks to months to settle
- **Sensitivity:** exposed root surfaces may be sensitive
- **Surgical risks:** bleeding, swelling and infection are possible, as with any surgery

**Any surgical or invasive procedure carries risks. Before proceeding, you should seek a second opinion from an appropriately qualified health practitioner.**

## Aftercare

- ✓ **Pain relief:** some tenderness is common; use pain relief as your dentist recommends
- ✓ **Diet:** soft foods and lukewarm soups at first
- ✓ **Cleaning:** brush other areas gently and keep the treated site clean and undisturbed
- ✓ **Follow-up:** attend your review visits so healing can be checked

General guidance only. Always follow the specific instructions your dentist gives you.

## Costs & health funds

Fees depend on your treatment and are confirmed after an examination, with a written estimate before planned treatment starts. Your health fund rebate depends on your fund, level of extras cover, annual limits and waiting periods. We can claim on the spot with Tyro, so on the day you pay any gap. All health funds are welcome.

**Call (08) 9330 7115** if you have heavy bleeding, pain or swelling that gets worse, fever, or anything that worries you. For trouble breathing or swallowing, call 000.

## Questions to ask your dentist

- ? Why do I need crown lengthening, and what are the alternatives?
- ? Could the laser be used in my case?
- ? How long will healing take before my crown?
- ? What are the risks for me?
- ? What will the whole treatment cost, including the crown?

## Before your appointment

- ✓ Tell us about any changes to your health or medicines, especially blood thinners
- ✓ Have a normal meal beforehand: you may be numb for a few hours afterwards
- ✓ Stock up on soft foods and lukewarm soups for the first few days
- ✓ Book your review visits so healing can be checked
- ✓ Your Medicare card and health fund card, for on-the-spot claiming with Tyro
- ✓ A DVA or concession card, if you have one

General guidance only. Always follow your dentist's specific instructions.

## Myaree Dental & Professional Centre

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