

# Considering Extraction for a **Decayed Tooth**

## When an extraction is necessary

When a tooth is severely decayed and cannot be saved, extracting it can be the best choice for relieving pain and preventing the spread of infection.



*Placing a crown*



*Bone loss*



*Checking x-rays*



*Severely decayed tooth*

## Most decayed teeth can be saved

Most decayed teeth can be treated successfully with a filling or crown. But for these treatments to work, there must be enough healthy tooth structure above the jawbone to support the restoration.

For example, a crown is often used to cover, protect, and restore a tooth that's been damaged by decay. The crown attaches to the part of the tooth that's above the bone, so an adequate amount of tooth structure must remain to hold the crown securely.

## Some teeth cannot be saved

If too much of your tooth has been severely damaged by decay, there isn't enough healthy tooth structure left to hold a restoration. In this case, we may have no choice but to remove what remains of the tooth.

## Diagnosis and treatment

To determine if an extraction is right for your situation, we'll perform a thorough exam, which typically includes x-rays.

If the tooth cannot be saved, it's important to extract it as soon as possible to prevent infection in the tooth and jawbone. With modern dental techniques, the procedure should be a comfortable one for you. In many cases, we also recommend replacing an extracted tooth to preserve the jawbone and stabilize your bite, so we'll talk with you about your replacement options.