

Pulpotomies and Stainless Steel Crowns

Pulpotomy:

A pulpotomy is a procedure that is recommended and performed when your child has either:

- A deep cavity/deep decay on a baby tooth that is into the territory of the nerve or the nerve itself or
- An inflamed nerve that is demonstrating irreversible inflammation or irreversible nerve damage.

When a cavity becomes very deep and close to the nerve (sometimes even into the nerve), the pulp (nerve) becomes irritated and inflamed. Your child may present with a toothache or have tenderness or discomfort during chewing. The tooth may even be sensitive to temperature changes or have lingering sensitivity after cold or hot foods/liquids. If the toothache continues without treatment, the tooth will eventually abscess. If the tooth becomes abscessed, the recommended treatment would be removal of the tooth.



The pulpotomy procedure consists of the removal of the decay as well as the removal of the inflamed pulp (nerve) tissue in the uppermost part of the tooth. Medicaments are then placed that cover the remaining portion of the nerve in the root portion of the tooth. The tooth is then restored using a filling material (white or silver), or a stainless steel crown is placed over the baby tooth. It can sometimes be referred to as a "baby root canal" but it is not an actual root canal.

Pulpotomies are a common procedure performed on pediatric patients. They are a really good and reliable way to save a badly decayed or deeply decayed baby tooth that is not abscessed.

On occasion, there may be microscopic bacteria that is not visible which may cause underlying infection. If this is the case, the tooth may become abscessed or painful and likely need to be removed in the future.

Stainless Steel Crowns:

Stainless steel crowns (SSC) are metal caps used to repair decayed baby molars (back tooth) and prevent them from decaying further. Porcelain crowns are tooth colored crowns used to restore deeply decayed or broken down front baby teeth. They are made to fit the exact size and shape of a child's tooth, and are used to cap teeth with large or deep cavities. Crowns for children are generally completed in one visit, and will usually last until the tooth falls out at around the age of 12.

The goal of using these crowns are to restore the health of the tooth for longevity. We place crowns on baby teeth that have decay in between the teeth, or on teeth which are too damaged to be repaired with fillings. We also place stainless steel crowns after pulpotomies are completed on primary teeth.

