

Patients Name: _____ **Date of Birth:** _____

Personal Medical History:

Check yes or no to indicate whether you have had any of the following (circle to add needed information):

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | AIDS/HIV Positive | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Heart problems/Heart Surgeries |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | ADD | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Hemophilia/Abnormal bleeding/Blood Disease |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Anaphylaxis | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Hepatitis A/B/C |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Anemia | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Herpes |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Anxiety | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | High Blood Pressure |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Arthritis, Rheumatism | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Immunizations |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Artificial joints (Hip/Knee/Shoulder) | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Kidney disease or malfunction |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Asthma | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Liver disease |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Atopic (allergy prone) | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Material allergies (latex/wool/metal/chemicals) |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Autism Spectrum | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Neurological Disorders |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Back problems | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Radiation treatment |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Blood disease | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Rapid weight gain or loss |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Cancer: _____ | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Respiratory disease/COPD/Shortness of breath |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Chemotherapy | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Rheumatic/Scarlett fever |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Circulatory problems | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Shingles |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Cortisone treatments | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Spina Bifida |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Cough up blood | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Stroke |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Cough, persistent | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Surgical implant |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Dementia | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Swelling of feet or ankles |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Depression | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Thyroid disease or malfunction |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Diabetes | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Tobacco habit |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Dialysis | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Tonsillitis |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Epilepsy/Seizures | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Tuberculosis |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Fainting | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Ulcer/Colitis |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Glaucoma | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Venereal disease/STD |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Headaches/Migraines | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Other Medical condition not listed:
_____ |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Heart murmur/Mitral Valve Prolapse | | |

Women: Are you pregnant? Yes No Nursing? Yes No Taking Birth Control? Yes No

Bisphosphonate Intake/Osteoporosis Treatment:

Are you being treated for osteoporosis (pills, injections, or any other type)? Yes No

If yes, name of medication and/or treatment: _____

Date of last intake and/or treatment: _____

Physicians Name: _____ Phone: _____ Date of last visit: _____

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Personal Dental History:

Please indicate your chief concern: _____

Are you in dental discomfort today? Yes No

Please check yes or no if you have or have had problems with any of the following.

- | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | Bad breath | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | Periodontal treatment |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | Bleeding gums | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | Sensitivity to cold |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | Clicking or popping jaw/pain | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | Sensitivity to hot |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | Food collection between teeth | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | Sensitivity to sweets |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | Grinding or clenching teeth | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | Sensitivity when biting |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | Loose teeth or broken fillings | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | Sores or growths in mouth |

How often do you brush? _____ How often do you floss? _____

How do you feel about the appearance of your teeth? _____

Have you experienced an adverse reaction during/in conjunction with a medical or dental procedure? Yes No

If so, explain: _____

Other information about your dental health or previous treatment: _____

List current medications: _____

List all known allergies: _____

List hospital visits/surgeries: _____

Do you use any drugs, such as marijuana (cannabis), cocaine, heroin, etc.?

Name	Past Use	Currently Using

_____ (Patient initials) I have received a copy of the Dental Materials Fact Sheet as required by law.

Authorization:

I have reviewed the information on this questionnaire, and it is accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that this information will be used by the dentist to help determine appropriate and healthful dental treatment. If there is any change in my medical status, I will inform the dentist.

I authorize the insurance company indicated on this form to pay to the dentist all insurance benefits otherwise payable to me for services rendered. I authorize the use of this signature on all insurance submissions. I authorize the dentist to release all information necessary to secure the payment of benefits. I understand that I am financially responsible for all charges whether or not paid by insurance.

Print Patient or Parent/Guardian Name

Patient or Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

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Patient's Name

Date of Birth

The undersigned, as the above patient or as the parent, legal guardian or legal representative of the above patient, hereby consents to treatment of the above patient by Western Sierra Medical Clinic (WSMC) and its dental providers and dental staff.

Treatment may include any necessary examination, x-ray, test or medical procedure a WSMC dental provider in the exercise of his/her best judgment may deem advisable for the above patient to be performed by WSMC dental staff. I understand and acknowledge this authorization is given in advance of any specific diagnosis, treatment or procedure being required to provide specific consent to any and all such diagnosis, treatment or procedure a WSMC dental provider in the exercise of his/her best judgment may deem advisable for the above patient.

I understand the above patient may ask questions and have all questions answered and also may refuse treatment at any time.

This authorization shall remain effective for one year from the date signed, unless sooner revoked in writing.

Patient, Parent, Legal Guardian or

Print Full Name

Date

Legal Representative Guarantor Signature

I understand that Western Sierra Medical Clinic has an established “No Show” policy as part of its commitment to providing quality care to all patients of the clinic. A “No Show” is when I cancel an appointment with less than 24 hours advance notice or I do not show up for a scheduled appointment.

For all dental services, I understand that after two “No Shows” within one year I will not be able to schedule another appointment, and may not be permitted to receive care at WSMC.

I understand it is crucial for my oral health that I show up for my scheduled appointments and that I show up on time – 15 minutes or earlier. I also acknowledge as part of my commitment that I need to notify WSMC at least 24 hours prior to my scheduled appointment if I am unable to keep it. This way, other WSMC patients can fill those slots in your absence to get the care they need.

We would like to thank you in advance for your understanding and compliance with our scheduling policies, which help improve our ability to provide care for our community. WSMC values you as a patient and we are committed to caring for your oral health needs.

Effective health care is a two-way street and we look forward to working with you. Please let us know if you would like to discuss any aspect of this “No Show” policy.

I received, read and understand the WSMC policies about “No Shows.”

Print Patient or Parent/Guardian Name

Patient or Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Print Patient Name: _____ **Date of Birth:** ____ / ____ / ____

*Most of these consents, policies, and disclosures refer to
a page number in the "New Patient Welcome Packet"*

Notice of Privacy Practices

_____ (Patient Initials) WSMC's Notice of Privacy Practices is posted in the lobby of each WSMC facility and on the WSMC website. A copy can be furnished to you upon request. I read and understand WSMC's Notice of Privacy Practices.

No-Show Policy

_____ (Patient initials) I received, read and understand the WSMC policies about "No Shows." **(Page 3)**

Patient's Rights and Responsibilities

_____ (Patient initials) I received, read and understand the Patient's Rights and Responsibilities. **(Pages 4 & 4a)**

Notice and Acknowledgement of Prescription Protocol

_____ (Patient initials) I received, read and understand WSMC policy regarding controlled substances **(Page 5)**

Consent for Billing, Release and Assignments

_____ (Patient initials) All co-payments, deposits and sliding fees are due and payable at the time of check-in. I assign all insurance payments to be made directly to WSMC. This authorization and assignment is a permanent, one-time consent. I reserve the right to revoke this at any time with my written notice. **(Pages 6 & 6a)**

_____ (Patient initials) I authorize the release of information from approved claim forms to an insurer or authorized agency as well as medical information needed to determine benefits or benefits payable to related services. I also permit a copy of this authorization to be used in place of the original.

Consent to Test in the Event of Accidental Health Provider Exposure to Potential Blood-borne Pathogens:

_____ (Patient initials) I consent to the performance of a blood test if my health provider is accidentally cut or suffers a needle stick in the course of my treatment.

Verification that you have received the "New Patient Welcome Packet"

_____ (Patient initials) I received, understand and agree with all of the information in the New Patient Welcome Packet.

Notices, policies and procedures subject to change

_____ (Patient initials) The above notices, policies and procedures are subject to change. I understand and agree I will be notified of any change to any notice, policy or procedure through the patient portal and that I will be subject to those changes unless I indicate in writing that I do not accept the changes.

Can confidential messages be left on your voice mail? _____ Yes _____ No

Signature of Patient, Parent or Legal Guardian: _____ **Date** ____ / ____ / ____

WSMC Staff Signature: _____



Welcome to Western Sierra Medical Clinic!

Western Sierra Medical Clinic, Inc. (WSMC) has been providing health care services in our community since 1979. From health centers in Downieville and Grass Valley, we have added a site in Penn Valley and expanded into Placer County with locations in Auburn and Kings Beach-Tahoe. While we have grown, our mission to provide high quality health care, regardless of a patient's ability to pay, has remained constant. We have a team of first-rate medical, dental and behavioral health providers who are part of the community and are committed to each patient's health and wellness.

Important Patient Information

The contents of this packet spell out the policies, conditions and requirements for a patient at WSMC. It is important for every patient to read and confirm their acceptance of specific policies, disclosures and consents listed on the New Patient Confirmations form. These are requirements of WSMC and the laws and regulations that govern health center operations.



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Scott McFarland

Welcome to Western Sierra Medical Clinic!

I want to personally welcome you to our growing health center. I am proud to share with you the quality of medicine our providers have been giving to our patients for many years.

Our health center has provided comprehensive care for more than 40 years to patients of a variety of ages, conditions and insurances. We are excited to extend our commitment to excellent care to you.

I have worked for many years as a physician for Western Sierra providing care for our patients. As Chief Medical Officer, I am devoted to continuing a tradition of better health to an ever-growing population, which now includes you!

Our caring, well-trained medical staff are dedicated to keeping you as healthy as possible, including wellness care and chronic disease management, as well as the medical issues that come up unexpectedly and require Urgent Care.

We look forward to meeting you.

To your good health,

Heather Lucas-Ross, MD
Chief Medical Officer

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Rev. 5.22.17

Nevada County

844 Old Tunnel Road, Grass Valley, CA 95945
10544 Spenceville Road, Penn Valley, CA 95946
CoRR, 180 Sierra College Drive, Grass Valley, CA 95945

Placer County

3111 Professional Drive, Auburn, CA 95603
12183 Locksley Lane, Suite 106, Auburn, CA 95602
Kings Beach-Tahoe, 8665 Salmon Ave., Kings Beach, CA 96143

Sierra County

209 Nevada Street, Downieville, CA 95936



WSMC has established a “No-Show” policy in order to maintain quality health care to all patients of the health center.

Medical

For Medical services, a no-show is when a patient calls and cancels an appointment less than 24 hours before the appointment or the patient does not show up for a scheduled appointment.

- After two no-shows, a patient will be placed on scheduling probation, which means the patient will be able to schedule appointments but must call and confirm the appointment the day before.
- If the patient does not confirm the appointment, the appointment will be cancelled.
- If the patient shows for the unconfirmed appointment, the patient will not be seen.
- If the patient does not show for an appointment after confirming it, the patient will be considered for discharge from the practice.
- After a patient on scheduling probation demonstrates a pattern of attending appointments consistently, he or she can be considered for removal from scheduling probation.

Dental

For all Dental services, after two no-shows within one year (cancelled appointment with less than 24 hours’ advance notice and/or not showing up for a scheduled appointment), the patient will not be able to schedule another appointment and may not be permitted to receive care at WSMC.

Behavioral Health

For Behavioral Health services, if a patient does not show for an appointment once, he or she will not be able to schedule another appointment and instead would be on stand-by status (the patient can come in and wait for an opening to occur) or call-in status (call in the morning to see if there is an opening on the same day). If a patient fails to show for a call-in appointment, he or she can be considered for discharge from Behavioral Health services (although he or she could still be seen for medical and dental services).



Western Sierra Medical Clinic (WSMC) is committed to providing quality of care to our clients and their families. We encourage patients to be aware of their rights and responsibilities as listed below:

You Have the Right to:

1. Receive considerate, respectful, and culturally appropriate care based on professional standards of practice.
2. Receive services without discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, marital status, religion, age, handicap, sexual orientation or preference, national origin, ancestry or diagnosis.
3. Establish advance directives and participate in ethical decision making.
4. Receive an explanation of your diagnosis, treatment, and prognosis in terms and language you can understand.
5. Receive the necessary information to participate in decisions about your care and to give your informed consent before any diagnostic or therapeutic procedure is performed.
6. Refuse any treatment, except as prohibited by law, and to be informed of the consequences of making this decision, which may include informing Children, Youth, and Family Services or Protective Services.
7. Expect that your personal privacy will be respected by all staff.
8. Expect that your medical records will be kept confidential and information will be released only with your written consent, in cases of medical emergencies, or in accordance with law.
9. Know WSMC policy for accessing and disclosing information in your medical records and reviewing your medical record, upon request, at a mutually designated time.
10. Receive a full explanation of any research or experimental procedure proposed for treatment and the opportunity to give your informed consent before any procedure will begin.
11. Know the name and qualification of all individuals providing service and how to contact that person.
12. Obtain another medical opinion prior to any procedure.
13. Have your legal custodian access your written medical records by appointment.
14. Ask for and receive information on your financial liability and an explanation of charges, including services that will be charged to your insurance.
15. File a complaint about services rendered without fear of discrimination from WSMC by submitting a written complaint or by calling WSMC's Chief Communications Officer at (530) 273-4984 ext. 106 between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

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You are Responsible for:

1. Providing accurate personal, financial, insurance and medical information, including all medications and treatments, necessary to establish and follow your plan of care.
2. Asking questions if you do not understand the explanation of your diagnosis, treatment, prognosis or any instructions.
3. Informing WSMC of any requirements or accommodations needed to meet your cultural and/or language needs.
4. Following rules and regulations that are posted within WSMC while in the facility.
5. Not carrying any type of weapons when receiving treatment.
6. Not harming or being abusive to other persons including WSMC staff.
7. Keeping all scheduled appointments, arriving on time, and being able to participate in treatment.
8. Notifying WSMC with 24 hours' advance notice or as soon as you are aware that you cannot keep an appointment.
9. Informing WSMC health care professionals regarding any changes or reactions to medication and/or treatment.
10. Paying for services promptly including co-payments and total of cash charges at the time of service.
11. Advising WSMC of any problems or dissatisfaction with the service being provided.
12. Extending to WSMC staff the same courtesy given to you.
13. Developing and participating in your treatment planning.
14. Providing for the supervision and safety of your children while in the facility.
15. Keeping WSMC apprised of your current contact information.
16. Not videotaping or recording any WSMC staff.

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Notice and Acknowledgement of Prescription Protocol

As a new patient to our health center, please note that your provider will make a comprehensive assessment of your health, and will work to create a health plan to best meet your health needs.

Your provider may or may not choose to prescribe the same medications that you may have been prescribed to you in the past. Our providers utilize current best practices and information to create treatment plans. You and your provider may agree that your medical condition may benefit by the prescription of controlled medication(s). The main goal of using a controlled medication is to improve your physical and vocational functioning. If these goals are not met, the medication will be discontinued. The use of controlled medications can lead to chemical dependency and possibly addiction. You and your provider will discuss the side effects of the medication(s) and the manner by which it is to be used.

If you are already dependent on controlled substances, your provider will expect you to submit urine for a drug test at your first visit. Your provider will also check the prescription drug monitoring program to determine the history of your prescription activities in the past year.

If you are currently taking **Suboxone** or **Buprenorphine**, it will be necessary for you to be referred to our Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) program. This could potentially delay our ability to schedule you immediately with one of our primary care providers.

During the initial evaluation, your WSMC provider may determine that the previous medications prescribed by a different provider are not appropriate, are not safe, or are causing more harm than good. If that is the case, your WSMC provider will explain the treatment plan options, which may include referral to detoxification services, tapering doses, discontinuation of medications, alternative pain management techniques, or substituting medications. If you are not in agreement with the options presented to you, you are welcome to seek care for your condition that has been treated with controlled substances elsewhere.

When prescribed a controlled substance at WSMC you will be asked at the time of your first prescription and on an annual basis to sign a treatment agreement, which is a standardized agreement that ensures that you are aware of the expectations to keep your medications secure, to take your medications as prescribed and to avoid potential dangerous situations. A copy of this agreement is available by request.

Please sign below to acknowledge that you have read this information and agree to work within this Western Sierra Medical Clinic policy.

In our continuing efforts to provide a medical home and continuity of care, we look forward to a long and mutually beneficial health relationship.



Financial Responsibility for Health Center Services (Credit Policy)

It is the patient's responsibility to pay their share of charges provided by WSMC. This means that co-payments are due and payable at the time of appointment. Except as noted, any other balances must be paid in full within thirty (30) days of the statement date.

Willingness to Pay

No one will be denied medical, dental or other clinic services at WSMC because of an inability to pay so long as there is a "willingness" to pay. Willingness means a commitment to follow a payment plan, as needed, in order to pay off any outstanding balance within 90 days. In the absence of a demonstrated willingness to pay, a patient's account will be assigned to an outside collection agency. When an account is sent for collection, the patient may be required to pay a deposit on the day of service prior to being seen for any future visits or be dismissed as a patient.

Uninsured Patient Discount

WSMC offers a 20 percent discount to uninsured patients, if charges are paid in full at the time of appointment.

Sliding Fee

For patients who qualify, a sliding scale discount may be applied for the current visit and for the next six months. A sliding scale discount may also be applied when the sliding fee application is completed for the date of service and the required proof of insurance is submitted within the 15-day calendar grace period. Please see a WSMC Billing staff member for any questions regarding the sliding fee scale.

Assignment

WSMC cannot bill insurance carriers in situations such as an automobile accident. However, WSMC will provide information to submit a claim. WSMC accepts assignments on Medicare and Medi-Cal claims but cannot make assurances that charges will be covered by the insurance carrier.

Patient Share of Charges

The patient/guardian/representative is responsible for co-payments, co-insurance, deductibles, and charges not covered or approved by the patient's insurance carrier, whether or not the carrier is contracted with WSMC. However, as a courtesy, non-contracted insurance carriers may be billed for reimbursement by WSMC on the patient's behalf. Insurance coverage can be confusing and WSMC staff is committed to helping patients answer any questions.

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Identity and Insurance Verification

Patients are required to provide WSMC with correct insurance information and to verify current personal information (home address, employer, phone number, insurance cards, and photo ID) at the time of appointment check-in. **It is important that you bring proof of insurance each time you visit. Failure to do so may result in you not being seen or being required to make a full payment at the time services are rendered.**

Payment

WSMC accepts cash, checks or major credit cards. Checks should be made payable to Western Sierra Medical Clinic.

A \$25.00 fee will be charged for the first check returned by the bank and a service fee of up to \$35 for each subsequent check returned by the bank to that same payee [Cal. Civ. Code 1719 (2003)].

Special Circumstances

In an emergency situation, services may be provided by a WSMC provider to a patient regardless of the patient's account status. However, services will be provided only for such an emergency situation.

Authorization for Release and Assignment of Benefits

Payment of authorized Medicare, Medi-Cal, government and any other third party benefits made on your behalf and/or on behalf of all members covered on your insurance plan will be made directly to Western Sierra Medical Clinic, on services furnished by your health provider.

If other health insurance coverage is indicated in the CMS-1500 claim form or elsewhere on other approved claim forms or electronically submitted claims, we require your signature to authorize release of the information to the insurer or agency shown, to release medical information to determine benefits or benefits payable to related services, and to permit a copy of this authorization to be used in place of the original.



My Health Gateway Patient Portal Enrollment

Western Sierra Medical Clinic uses the latest technologies to increase our quality of care, and to make it easier for you to access your health records and communicate with your health care team. One such method is through an online “patient portal.” Adults 18 years of age and older must sign up for the portal. It is not available for minors or for guardians to see their children’s records. You need an email address and access to a computer to enroll in our online patient portal, which we call **“My Health Gateway: Your Online Wellness Connection.”** If you do not have access to a computer at home to access your Gateway, one is available at each of our sites and also the internet is accessible at public libraries and other locations.

The Gateway is convenient, secure, and lets you log on from home (or from any computer, tablet or smartphone), at your convenience, to do many things, including the following:

- View upcoming appointments (date and time)
- Check referral status
- View and download/print your personal health record, including your medications, immunizations, and lab results.
- Receive notices of updates and changes to WSMC’s policies, procedures, protocols and forms.

Your personal information is safe on the Gateway. Access to your information requires the entry of your user name, a password, and the correct answer to your security questions.

You will receive an email notification of your Gateway enrollment after returning your New Patient Packet to us and being accepted as a patient. The email will contain:

- A link to the Gateway website
- Your user name
- A temporary password

Be sure to set up your Gateway account when you get our email, by logging in with your temporary password, then choosing your own password.

We welcome your active use of the Gateway so you can be a full partner in maintaining better health. Once you’ve completed your enrollment by logging in, you will be able to access the Gateway at any time by going to our website at www.wsmcmed.org. Click on the colorful, round “My Health Gateway” button at the top of the home page. If you have any questions or problems with the Gateway, please call us at (530) 274-9762 during regular business hours.

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Dental Materials – Advantages & Disadvantages

PORCELAIN FUSED TO METAL

This type of porcelain is a glass-like material that is “enameled” on top of metal shells. It is tooth-colored and is used for crowns and fixed bridges

Advantages

- ♥ Good resistance to further decay if the restoration fits well
- ♥ Very durable, due to metal substructure
- ♥ The material does not cause tooth sensitivity
- ♥ Resists leakage because it can be shaped for a very accurate fit

Disadvantages

- More tooth must be removed (than for porcelain) for the metal substructure
- Higher cost because it requires at least two office visits and laboratory services

GOLD ALLOY

Gold alloy is a gold-colored mixture of gold, copper, and other metals and is used mainly for crowns and fixed bridges and some partial denture frameworks

Advantages

- ♥ Good resistance to further decay if the restoration fits well
- ♥ Excellent durability; does not fracture under stress
- ♥ Does not corrode in the mouth
- ♥ Minimal amount of tooth needs to be removed
- ♥ Wears well; does not cause excessive wear to opposing teeth
- ♥ Resists leakage because it can be shaped for a very accurate fit

Disadvantages

- Is not tooth colored; alloy is yellow
- Conducts heat and cold; may irritate sensitive teeth
- High cost; requires at least two office visits and laboratory services

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5/04

The Facts About Fillings

The Facts About Fillings



DENTAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA

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Dental Materials Fact Sheet

What About the Safety of Filling Materials?

Patient health and the safety of dental treatments are the primary goals of California’s dental professionals and the Dental Board of California. The purpose of this fact sheet is to provide you with information concerning the risks and benefits of all the dental materials used in the restoration (filling) of teeth.

The Dental Board of California is required by law* to make this dental materials fact sheet available to every licensed dentist in the state of California. Your dentist, in turn, must provide this fact sheet to every new patient and all patients of record only once before beginning any dental filling procedure.

As the patient or parent/guardian, you are strongly encouraged to discuss with your dentist the facts presented concerning the filling materials being considered for your particular treatment.

* *Business and Professions Code 1648.10-1648.20*

Allergic Reactions to Dental Materials

Components in dental fillings may have side effects or cause allergic reactions, just like other materials we may come in contact with in our daily lives. The risks of such reactions are very low for all types of filling materials. Such reactions can be caused by specific components of the filling materials such as mercury, nickel, chromium, and/or beryllium alloys. Usually, an allergy will reveal itself as a skin rash and is easily reversed when the individual is not in contact with the material.

There are no documented cases of allergic reactions to composite resin, glass ionomer, resin ionomer, or porcelain. However, there have been rare allergic responses reported with dental amalgam, porcelain fused to metal, gold alloys, and nickel or cobalt-chrome alloys.

If you suffer from allergies, discuss these potential problems with your dentist before a filling material is chosen.

PORCELAIN (CERAMIC)

Porcelain is a glass-like material formed into fillings or crowns using models of the prepared teeth. The material is tooth-colored and is used in inlays, veneers, crowns and fixed bridges.

Advantages

- ♥ Very little tooth needs to be removed for use as a veneer; more tooth needs to be removed for a crown because its strength is related to its bulk (size)
- ♥ Good resistance to further decay if the restoration fits well
- ♥ Is resistant to surface wear but can cause some wear on opposing teeth
- ♥ Resists leakage because it can be shaped for a very accurate fit
- ♥ The material does not cause tooth sensitivity

Disadvantages

- Material is brittle and can break under biting forces
- May not be recommended for molar teeth
- Higher cost because it requires at least two office visits and laboratory services

NICKEL OR COBALT-CHROME ALLOYS

Nickel or cobalt-chrome alloys are mixtures of nickel and chromium. They are a dark silver metal color and are used for crowns and fixed bridges and most partial denture frameworks.

Advantages

- ♥ Good resistance to further decay if the restoration fits well
- ♥ Excellent durability; does not fracture under stress
- ♥ Does not corrode in the mouth
- ♥ Minimal amount of tooth needs to be removed
- ♥ Resists leakage because it can be shaped for a very accurate fit

Disadvantages

- Is not tooth colored; alloy is a dark silver metal color
- Conducts heat and cold; may irritate sensitive teeth
- Can be abrasive to opposing teeth
- High cost; requires at least two office visits and laboratory services
- Slightly higher wear to opposing teeth



Dental Materials – Advantages & Disadvantages

GLASS IONOMER CEMENT

Glass ionomer cement is a self-hardening mixture of glass and organic acid. It is tooth-colored and varies in translucency. Glass ionomer is usually used for small fillings, cementing metal and porcelain/metal crowns, liners, and temporary restorations.

Advantages

- ♥ Reasonably good esthetics
- ♥ May provide some help against decay because it releases fluoride
- ♥ Minimal amount of tooth needs to be removed and it bonds well to both the enamel and the dentin beneath the enamel
- ♥ Material has low incidence of producing tooth sensitivity
- ♥ Usually completed in one dental visit

Disadvantages

- Cost is very similar to composite resin (which costs more than amalgam)
- Limited use because it is not recommended for biting surfaces in permanent teeth
- As it ages, this material may become rough and could increase the accumulation of plaque and chance of periodontal disease
- Does not wear well; tends to crack over time and can be dislodged

RESIN-IONOMER CEMENT

Resin ionomer cement is a mixture of glass and resin polymer and organic acid that hardens with exposure to a blue light used in the dental office. It is tooth colored but more translucent than glass ionomer cement. It is most often used for small fillings, cementing metal and porcelain metal crowns and liners.

Advantages

- ♥ Very good esthetics
- ♥ May provide some help against decay because it releases fluoride
- ♥ Minimal amount of tooth needs to be removed and it bonds well to both the enamel and the dentin beneath the enamel
- ♥ Good for non-biting surfaces
- ♥ May be used for short-term primary teeth restorations
- ♥ May hold up better than glass ionomer but not as well as composite
- ♥ Good resistance to leakage
- ♥ Material has low incidence of producing tooth sensitivity
- ♥ Usually completed in one dental visit

Disadvantages

- Cost is very similar to composite resin (which costs more than amalgam)
- Limited use because it is not recommended to restore the biting surfaces of adults
- Wears faster than composite and amalgam

Toxicity of Dental Materials

Dental Amalgam

Mercury in its elemental form is on the State of California's Proposition 65 list of chemicals known to the state to cause reproductive toxicity. Mercury may harm the developing brain of a child or fetus.

Dental amalgam is created by mixing elemental mercury (43-54%) and an alloy powder (46-57%) composed mainly of silver, tin, and copper. This has caused discussion about the risks of mercury in dental amalgam. Such mercury is emitted in minute amounts as vapor. Some concerns have been raised regarding possible toxicity. Scientific research continues on the safety of dental amalgam. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there is scant evidence that the health of the vast majority of people with amalgam is compromised.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and other public health organizations have investigated the safety of amalgam used in dental fillings. The conclusion: no valid scientific evidence has shown that amalgams cause harm to patients with dental restorations, except in rare cases of allergy. The World Health Organization reached a similar conclusion stating, "Amalgam restorations are safe and cost effective."

A diversity of opinions exists regarding the safety of dental amalgams. Questions have been raised about its safety in pregnant women, children, and diabetics. However, scientific evidence and research literature in peer-reviewed scientific journals suggest that otherwise healthy women, children, and diabetics are not at an increased risk from dental amalgams in their mouths. The FDA places no restrictions on the use of dental amalgam.

Composite Resin

Some Composite Resins include Crystalline Silica, which is on the State of California's Proposition 65 list of chemicals known to the state to cause cancer.

It is always a good idea to discuss any dental treatment thoroughly with your dentist.

DENTAL AMALGAM FILLINGS

Dental amalgam is a self-hardening mixture of silver-tin-copper alloy powder and liquid mercury and is sometimes referred to as silver fillings because of its color. It is often used as a filling material and replacement for broken teeth.

Advantages

- ♥ Durable; long lasting
- ♥ Wears well; holds up well to the forces of biting
- ♥ Relatively inexpensive
- ♥ Generally completed in one visit
- ♥ Self-sealing; minimal-to-no shrinkage and resists leakage
- ♥ Resistance to further decay is high, but can be difficult to find in early stages
- ♥ Frequency of repair and replacement is low

Disadvantages

- Refer to “What About the Safety of Filling Materials”
- Gray colored, not tooth colored
- May darken as it corrodes; may stain teeth over time
- Requires removal of some healthy tooth
- In larger amalgam fillings, the remaining tooth may weaken and fracture
- Because metal can conduct hot and cold temperatures, there may be a temporary sensitivity to hot and cold.
- Contact with other metals may cause occasional, minute electrical flow

The durability of any dental restoration is influenced not only by the material it is made from but also by the dentist’s technique when placing the restoration. Other factors include the supporting materials used in the procedure and the patient’s cooperation during the procedure. The length of time a restoration will last is dependent upon your dental hygiene, home care, and diet and chewing habits.

COMPOSITE RESIN FILLINGS

Composite fillings are a mixture of powdered glass and plastic resin, sometimes referred to as white, plastic, or tooth-colored fillings. It is used for fillings, inlays, veneers, partial and complete crowns, or to repair portions of broken teeth.

Advantages

- ♥ Strong and durable
- ♥ Tooth colored
- ♥ Single visit for fillings
- ♥ Resists breaking
- ♥ Maximum amount of tooth preserved
- ♥ Small risk of leakage if bonded only to enamel
- ♥ Does not corrode
- ♥ Generally holds up well to the forces of biting depending on product used
- ♥ Resistance to further decay is moderate and easy to find
- ♥ Frequency of repair or replacement is low to moderate

Disadvantages

- Refer to “*What About the Safety of Filling Materials*”
- Moderate occurrence of tooth sensitivity; sensitive to dentist’s method of application
- Costs more than dental amalgam
- Material shrinks when hardened and could lead to further decay and/or temperature sensitivity
- Requires more than one visit for inlays, veneers, and crowns
- May wear faster than dental enamel
- May leak over time when bonded beneath the layer of enamel

