



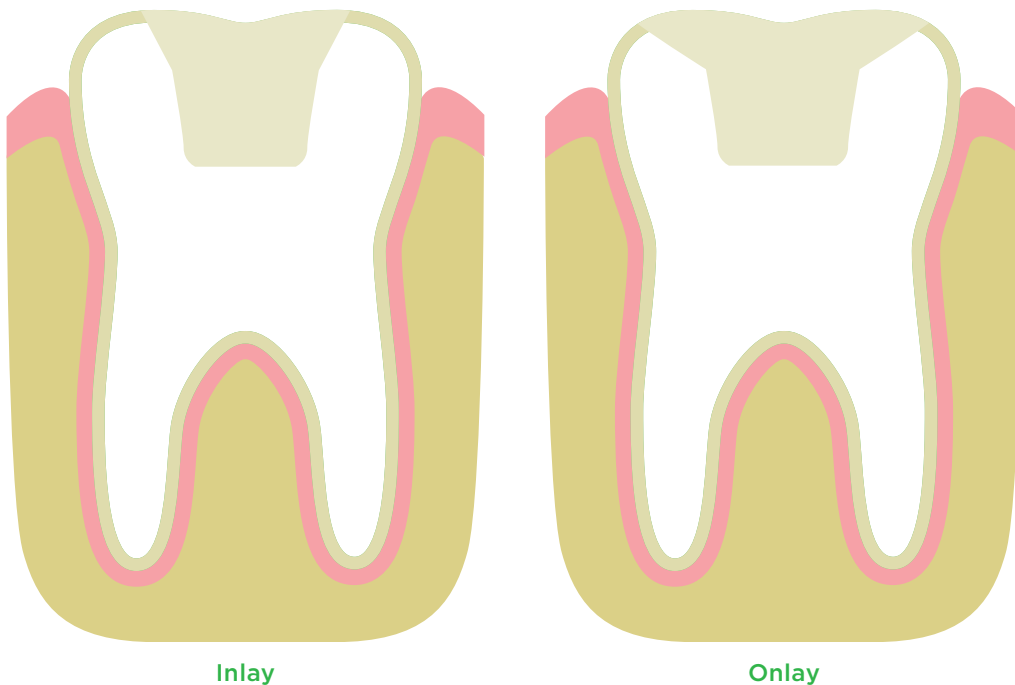
Indirect Fillings: Inlay/Onlay

What it is:

Instead of covering the entire chewing surface and sides of a damaged tooth like a crown does, an inlay or onlay only covers portions of the tooth. Generally, both of these options allow your dentist to keep more of your natural tooth compared to a crown or other fillings. An inlay fits into the contours of a tooth, while an onlay is larger and usually covers most of the tooth's chewing surfaces, but not all of the sides. Inlays and onlays are typically made of gold or a ceramic material, which are more durable long term than either amalgam or composite. Inlays and onlays require multiple appointments to place.

Why you would get one:

Your dentist may suggest inlays or onlays as a high-quality and potentially longer-lasting alternative to amalgam and composite. (Keep in mind that they're also more expensive.) In particular, onlays may be used if your cavity is too large to support a regular filling, but there is enough healthy tooth that you don't need a full crown. For this reason inlays and onlays are sometimes called "partial crowns."



How it works:

DIRECT INLAY OR ONLAY

Step 1

As with other fillings, your mouth will be numbed topically and locally.

Step 2

Your dentist will use a drill to remove the decay.

Step 3

The composite resin will be placed on the tooth. It's then molded to fit the tooth, removed and hardened in a special oven, all in your dentist's office. The office may also be equipped with a computer-assisted milling machine that can take an impression of the tooth and prepare a block of ceramic into the final restoration during a single appointment.

Step 4

Your dentist will cement the custom filling to your tooth and polish it.

Step 5

After it's placed, the filling may need to be shaped using special shaping and polishing bits for the high-speed dental drill. This is a painless process and requires no anesthetic.

INDIRECT INLAY OR ONLAY

Step 1

As with the direct inlay or onlay, your mouth will be numbed and decay will be removed with a drill.

Step 2

Your dentist will take an impression of the prepared tooth and send it to a laboratory for a custom fit, similar to the crown process.

Step 3

Your dentist will give the tooth a temporary filling in this first appointment.

Step 4

When the custom filling arrives, the placement process is the same as with a direct inlay or onlay.



If you have any questions about what your dental plan covers, talk with your dentist or visit [DeltaDentalAZ.com](https://www.DeltaDentalAZ.com) and sign in to view your benefits information.