

All general dentists are required by State of New Hampshire legislation, to provide patients facing restorative care with a *Dental Materials Fact Sheet*. Dr. Doner as well as many New Hampshire dentists have had no input into the content of this pamphlet and do not agree with portions of it.

In addition to the required pamphlet, we are providing you with the information below so that you will be aware of Dr. Doner's position on the issue of dental filling material. You will then be better able to make an informed decision on how to proceed with your dental treatment.

DR. DONER'S "NO-AMALGAM" (Silver Fillings) DECISION

Dr. Doner made a conscious decision early on in his career to not use amalgam filling material because it contains material (metals) that poses health concerns for everyone – patients, dentist, staff and the environment. In addition, because of its dark coloration, amalgam material takes away from a patient's natural appearance. He prefers using composite (tooth-colored) material because of its ability to adhere and seal better to the natural tooth, its ease when making any necessary adjustments, and, because of its cosmetic benefits. A patient's smile looks much nicer with composite fillings.

Amalgam fillings often require a dentist to remove more of the natural tooth structure, *including healthy portions of the tooth*, in order to accommodate "packing in" amalgam filling material. Composite fillings fit more easily into the areas where only the decayed tooth structure was removed, without having to take out any excess portions of tooth.

Dental Plan Benefit Limitations

Placing composite filling material into a tooth takes about 50% more time and more skill to complete, which is why fees for these types of fillings are more than for amalgam fillings. Regardless of this fact, the primary concern of dental benefit plan companies is how best to spread out their members' premium dollars to help cover the cost of dental care *among the majority of policyholders*. To accomplish this, they must make underwriting decisions that don't necessarily focus on or support the dental care that individual patients actually need or want.

It is well-known throughout the dental industry that most dental plan companies will pay toward the least-costly treatment; not necessarily the best treatment prescribed by the dentist for that patient's clinical needs. Most patients don't read or understand their policies, so they don't realize that their dental plan will base its payment on the cost for an *amalgam* filling, *regardless of the type of filling actually placed*. For example, gold fillings, a more expensive material; is the most durable filling available, however, dental plans will still only pay based on the rate for an amalgam filling.

Conclusion

As a new patient just joining our office, we want to be sure that you are aware of the type of fillings that Dr. Doner provides. We also want to point out that, if you usually had amalgam fillings placed, your out-of-pocket costs may now be more than what you may have experienced at your former dentist's office and/or more than your dental plan (if any) may describe in your policy.

You have a choice whether or not to come to us for your dental care. We have given you this information ahead of time because we don't want your first experiences with us to include any unpleasant budget surprises! Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.