

Dental Glossary

Term	Definition
Amalgam	A metallic mixture used to replace the physical and mechanical properties of a tooth.
Bicuspid	A tooth with two cusps (rounded surfaces) located in front of the molars
Bruxism	Grinding of the teeth
Caries	Common term for tooth decay
Calculus (Tartar)	A form of hardened dental plaque
Dental Pulp	Tissue that contains blood vessels and nerves within a tooth
Primary Dentition	The first teeth (baby teeth) otherwise known as deciduous meant to be replaced by permanent teeth
Mixed Dentition	A mixture of primary and permanent dentition or the transitional stage
Permanent Dentition	The permanent teeth or adult dentition
Extraction	Non-surgical removal of a tooth or tooth parts
Impaction	A tooth that has not completely come up to the surface and is positioned up against another tooth, bone or soft tissue
Intraoral	Situated, occurring, or performed within the mouth
Malocclusion	Misalignment or incorrect relation between the teeth of the two dental arches when they approach each other as the jaws close
Molar	Large flat topped grinding teeth located near the back of the mouth
Mucosal Tissue	Lining of the mouth and throat
Occlusal	The biting or contacting surfaces of opposing teeth
Odontectomy	Surgical removal of a tooth or tooth parts
Panoramic	A view of all the teeth and nearby structures on one image
Periapical	The area surrounding the end of the tooth root
Periodontal (gum)	The surrounding and supporting tissue of a tooth
Periodontal Disease	Usually begins with gingivitis. The gums appear reddened at the margins, slightly swollen and bleed when gently provoked by tooth brushing or flossing.
Pontics	Term for an artificial tooth on a bridge
Pulpotomy	Removal of a portion of the tooth pulp
Root Canal	Space inside the root of a tooth which contains the pulp tissue
Root Planing	Involves smoothing rough spots on the roots of the teeth that can promote gum disease by trapping and holding bacteria
Scaling	Process of removing dental plaque and calculus
Tomography	X-ray technique that produces an image as though the object were cut in half showing the inside structure