What are Direct Composites ?   7

Direct composites (white fillings) are perhaps the most commonly used cosmetic product in dentistry.

Direct composites have become the normal way of treating any cavity at the front of the mouth and are commonly used for even quite large fillings at the back of the mouth. They are based on materials developed in the 1970s and have been improved upon through many generations of materials over the past 30 years.

Fundamentally they are a plastic resin combined with minute silca particles that gives an amazing blend of strength, flexibility and aesthetics.

They are chemically and micromechanically bonded to enamel and dentine to give a tight seal between the filling and the tooth.

When looking to enhance a smile they can be used to build up worn teeth, widen teeth to close gaps and coat teeth to hide stains and fractures. Because they are built up directly in the mouth they can achieve same day results and when being used to build teeth can involve little or no adjustment to the underlying teeth.

The beauty of a simple composite restoration to add a seamless tip to a shortened tooth.

StoneRock Dental Care
StoneRock House
High Street
Hawkhurst
Kent
TN18 4AG

TELEPHONE 01580 752202
FAX 01580 752203
EMAIL info@stonerock.co.uk
WEB www.stonerockdentalcare.com

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In more advanced cases whole smiles can be transformed using little or no preparation.

Four front teeth made longer and the smile balanced.

Eight upper arch composites can enhance a smile with minimal preparation and no whitening.

Advantages
Relatively cheap
Quick –same day results
Can be non or minimally invasive
Easy to repair in mouth

Disadvantages
Prone to long term stain build up especially in smokers
Can wear down in heavy load areas
Limited ability to mask very dark underlying stains

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