

Health Service dental charges and treatments

The Health Service provides the dental care and treatment necessary to keep your mouth and teeth healthy. Depending on your circumstances, you may have to pay for all or some of your dental treatment.

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, patients are advised to contact their local dental practice for advice and referral for emergency dental care if necessary. More information is available from the [Health and Social Care Board website](#).(external link opens in a new window / tab)

Health Service dentists

Treatments available from a Health Service dentist include:

- an examination and assessment
- radiographs (x-rays)
- non-surgical treatment like scaling, polishing, periodontal (gum) treatments, marginal fillings and oral hygiene instruction
- surgical treatments like wisdom and other tooth removal
- fillings
- root canal fillings
- other treatments such as bridges, crowns, and dentures
- referral to a dental hospital for specialist treatment
- [Find local health services including dentists](#) (external link opens in a new window / tab)
- [Out of hours emergency dental treatment](#) (external link opens in a new window / tab)

Health Service dental charges

If you aren't entitled to free treatment or help with the treatment cost, you need to pay for some Health Service dental treatment. The charge is 80 per cent of the dentist's fee up to £384. The table below shows sample treatment prices.

Examples of Health Service dental charges

Dental treatment/ service	Price
Examination (basic – extensive)	from £7.03 to £22.11
One x-ray	£3.44
Two x-rays	£4.90
Scale and polish	£11.16
Amalgam filling	from £7.51 to £19.32
White filling (mainly front teeth only with Health Service)	from £14.72 to £37.39
Root filling molar	£84.72
Root filling premolar	from £47.43 to £54.99
Root filling incisor or canine	£40.26
White crown on front tooth	from £73.27 to £111.65
Metal crown on back tooth	from £74.90 to £97.26
Simple extraction	from £6.94 to £41.89
Surgical extraction	from £19.32 to £47.86
Full upper and lower denture	£152.98
One full denture	£95.46
One partial denture	from £59.88 to £94.39
Denture repair	Free

These are examples of treatment charges. The cost of your Health Service treatment may be different.

Dental amalgam

Dental amalgam is the silver coloured material that is commonly used to fill teeth that have decay. Amalgam is a mixture of mercury and other metals in a stable form and makes strong, long-lasting fillings.

Dental amalgam restrictions

New regulations in the UK and the European Union (EU) came into law in 2018 restricting the use of mercury to reduce environmental pollution. These affect the use of dental amalgam, sometimes known as metal or silver fillings, even though there is no evidence of any harm to health.

Restrictions are now placed on the use of dental amalgam in children under 15 years old and of pregnant or breastfeeding women. This is unless the dentist thinks that it is necessary.

Dentists will often use different techniques and materials but in some circumstances dental amalgam is still the best filling material to use. Your

dentist and their team will be able to explain the options for you or your child.

Children under 15 years old

If a child under 15 years old does need a filling your dentist can use other materials. These include tooth-coloured fillings or preformed (stainless steel) crowns.

In some situations dental amalgam is the only suitable material. Your dentist might advise that an amalgam filling is in the best interest of your child and will explain the reasons for this.

Pregnancy and breastfeeding

While you are pregnant your dentist will advise postponing any treatment unless it is urgent, for example, if you are in pain.

Pregnant women should avoid any unnecessary medical or dental treatment to minimise any possible risks to the developing baby unless it is really urgent.

If you need a filling when pregnant or breastfeeding, there are materials other than dental amalgam that your dentist can use in the interim until the full range of treatments are available. Your dentist will discuss the amalgam alternatives with you to agree on the best option.

- [Dental amalgam - information for patients under 15 year olds and pregnant and breastfeeding women](#)

Amalgam fillings you already have

If you already have amalgam fillings, there is no evidence to suggest that these are harmful to you or indeed indirectly to a baby's or infant's health.

Unless your amalgam fillings are broken or there is further decay, and urgent treatment is required, your dentist will not remove or replace them.

Preventing tooth decay

The best way to reduce the need for any type of filling is to prevent tooth decay by:

- reducing sugar-containing food and drinks, particularly at bedtime
- brushing your teeth with a fluoride toothpaste at least last thing at night, and another time during the day, your dentist can advise on toothpaste strength and quantity
- visiting your dentist regularly, taking your children from a very early age

Continuing Care

If you are registered for Continuing Care with your dentist, you may ask your dentist for a treatment plan. This is free and explains:

- what treatment your dentist recommends
- the price for each part of the treatment
- the likely total cost

Eligible for free dental treatment

You get free dental treatment in Northern Ireland if you are:

- aged under 18
- aged 18 and in full-time education
- pregnant, or have had a child, within the 12 months before treatment starts
- a hospital inpatient and the treatment is carried out by a hospital dentist
- getting, or your partner gets Income Support, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, or Pension Credit Guarantee Credit
- entitled to, or named on a valid tax credit exemption certificate
- a war pensioner and need the dental treatment test because of a disability which you get a war pension for
- a Hospital Dental Service outpatient
- a Community Dental Service patient

If you are a Hospital Dental Service outpatient or a Community Dental Service patient, you may have to pay for dentures and bridges.

- [Health service charges and optical voucher values HC12](#)

Low Income Scheme

If you have a low income but aren't entitled to free dental care, you might get help with the costs under the Low Income Scheme. To read about applying to the scheme, go to:

- [Claim for help with health and travel costs - form HC1](#)

Missing an appointment

Providers of Health Service dentistry can charge you if you miss an appointment. Different rules may apply in a private practice, so you should check what their policy is.