

Evolution of Dental Materials and Their Impact on Restorative Dentistry

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ABOUT THE STUDY

Dental materials have come a long way since the early days of dentistry, when silver and gold were the materials of choice for restoring damaged teeth. Over the years, numerous materials have been developed and refined, with each new generation offering better performance and more natural-looking results. In this article, we will take a closer look at the evolution of dental materials and their impact on restorative dentistry.

Amalgam

One of the oldest and most common materials used in dentistry, amalgam is a mixture of silver, tin, copper, and mercury. It is durable and relatively inexpensive, making it a popular choice for filling cavities in posterior teeth. However, concerns have been raised about the potential health risks associated with mercury exposure, leading many dentists to switch to alternative materials.

Composite resin

Also known as tooth-colored fillings, composite resin is a mixture of plastic and glass particles that can be color-matched to the patient's natural teeth. It is a popular choice for filling cavities in anterior teeth, as it provides a more natural-looking result than amalgam. Composite resin is also used in bonding procedures, such as repairing chips or cracks in teeth.

Porcelain

Porcelain is a ceramic material that is used to create dental crowns, bridges, and veneers. It is prized for its natural-looking appearance, durability, and resistance to staining. Porcelain restorations are custom-made in a dental laboratory, and are bonded to the patient's natural teeth using dental cement.

Glass ionomer

Similar to composite resin, glass ionomer is a mixture of glass and acrylic that can be color-matched to the patient's teeth. It is a popular choice for filling cavities in primary teeth, as it releases fluoride and can help prevent further decay. Glass ionomer is also used in cementing restorations and as a base or liner under composite resin fillings.

Zirconia

A relatively new material in dentistry, zirconia is a ceramic material that is prized for its strength and durability. It is used to create dental crowns, bridges, and implants, as well as in implant abutments. Zirconia restorations are custom-made in a dental laboratory, and can be color-matched to the patient's natural teeth.

The evolution of dental materials has had a significant impact on restorative dentistry. With the development of more durable and natural-looking materials, dentists are now able to provide their patients with more effective and aesthetically pleasing treatments. Patients can now receive restorations that are virtually indistinguishable from their natural teeth, improving their self-confidence and overall quality of life.

In addition to improving the appearance of restorations, dental materials have also become safer and more biocompatible. Concerns about the potential health risks associated with certain materials, such as mercury in amalgam, have led to the development of alternative materials that are safer for both patients and dental professionals.

Overall, the evolution of dental materials has had a profound impact on the field of restorative dentistry, allowing dentists to provide their patients with safer, more durable, and more natural-looking treatments than ever before.

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Received: 01-Mar-2023, Manuscript No. DCR-23-20903; **Editor assigned:** 06-Mar-2023, Pre QC No. DCR-23-20903 (PQ); **Reviewed:** 20-Mar-2023, QC No. DCR-23-20903; **Revised:** 27-Mar-2023, Manuscript No. DCR-23-20903 (R); **Published:** 04-Apr-2023, DOI: 10.35248/2161-1122.23.13.635

Citation: Luciana S (2023) Evolution of Dental Materials and Their Impact on Restorative Dentistry. J Dentistry. 13:635.

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