

Ask the Dentist: May attention Paul Schulteis:

Dear Dr. Winter, I recently had my lower 6 teeth (all in the front of jaw) crowned with temporary crowns. A temporary bridge was made and applied. I am having trouble speaking words with "S's." I have had the bridge with all the crowns filed down twice but still can't speak words with S's. Is this normal? Will my permanent teeth be less bulky (all will be single teeth) and will I be able to speak better?

Dear Nick, this is obviously a question your dentist needs to discuss with you. I can't give you any specific answer to your question as I haven't met you seen your initial teeth or bite or performed a thorough examination on you! The dentist is performing your treatment, understands what your starting point was and the reason for your new crowns. So you should discuss your concerns, and the dentist should either be able to work with you to recreate the "s" sound prior to delivering your new crowns or they should discuss the reasons why changes may need to occur that could change your speech. Some of these reasons could be to decrease trauma to the opposing teeth, improve your bite, or to change the crowding that may have been present. (Any of these could change your speech)

Often, teeth positions are changed with crowns to form a different esthetic or functional result. In these instances you may need to give your speech time to "acclimate" to the changes. If your speech cannot be improved upon, then the temporaries should be changed until they are acceptable to you. This new temporary should be a prototype or "blue print" for the laboratory to follow in creating the height, width, shape and emergence angles of your new crowns. If the dentist feels the bulkiness of the crowns is because they are in 1 piece as a bridge and this bulk is changing the air flow through the teeth or the way your tongue bounces off the teeth, then perhaps they can separate them into 6 individual temporaries to match the 6 individual crowns you will be receiving to see if that alone can improve your speech. Either way, it is important to work things out before you have the permanent crowns cemented as they can be difficult to remove and can create trauma to the remaining tooth structure if removed after cementation. In most instances they will need to be cut off to be removed which would require remaking them at a substantial cost to the patient (if approved for cementation) or the dentist.

While dentists can adjust your temporaries multiple times, if the edges of the teeth are in a different position then the "s" position or the closest speaking space between your upper and lower teeth could be off very slightly. In some instances we need to add to the temporaries in the front and reduce them in the back to make them come a bit closer to the upper teeth to create the s sound more

sharply. Lastly, your speech may be so close that only you can tell it's different! In that case you must trust the judgment of the dentist to make the subtle changes in porcelain to get it just right.

You can see more information about our practice at WWW.WINTERDENTAL.COM or www.wisconsinprosthodontics.com where you can access links to our 4 websites for examples of our dentistry, videos and photos of the procedures we offer.

Dr. Bruce and Dr. Rick

Richard Winter D.D.S. M.A.G.D. D.I.C.O.I.

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