CEREC Same-Day Crowns in Melbourne | Core Dental

Canonical: https://www.coredental.com.au/cerec-same-day-crowns-how-core-dentals-technology-saves-you-time/

Details:

CEREC is a CAD/CAM (computer-aided design and manufacturing) system made by Dentsply Sirona. It lets a dentist scan a prepared tooth, design a ceramic crown on screen and mill it in the practice, so a suitable crown can be fitted in one visit instead of two. At Core Dental we offer CEREC at our Epping, South Melbourne and Caroline Springs clinics. Whether it suits your tooth is a clinical decision made at your examination.

What does CEREC stand for and how does it work?

CEREC stands for Chairside Economical Restoration of Esthetic Ceramics. The name is a mouthful, but the idea is simple: a dentist digitally designs and mills a custom ceramic restoration, such as a crown, inlay, onlay or veneer, during a single appointment.

The process starts with a digital scan. Instead of taking a physical impression with trays of impression material, your dentist or dental nurse moves a small handheld wand, an intraoral scanner, around your prepared tooth and the teeth beside it. The wand captures a three-dimensional image that appears on screen. The dentist can rotate it, zoom in and take measurements.

From that model, the dentist uses the design software to draw your new crown. The software suggests a shape based on the surrounding teeth and the anatomy of the prepared tooth, and your dentist refines it so the bite is correct and the form looks natural. As a rough guide the design stage often takes somewhere around ten to fifteen minutes.

When the design is finished, it is sent digitally to a compact milling unit that sits in or near the surgery. The unit carves the crown from a block of dental ceramic, which in many cases takes around fifteen minutes. The block can be chosen to suit the shade of your natural teeth, and your dentist or dental nurse may make small adjustments to the colour and surface texture before the crown is polished and glazed.

Finally, the crown is fitted, the bite is checked and adjusted if needed, and you leave with a finished ceramic restoration from the same appointment. There is no temporary crown to look after in between, and no second visit just to cement the final crown. Timings vary with the tooth and the case, so treat these figures as a general guide.

How does CEREC change the traditional crown process?

A traditional crown usually takes two appointments, often about two weeks apart. At the first, the tooth is prepared, an impression is taken and a temporary crown is placed while a laboratory makes the final crown. At the second visit the temporary is removed and the final crown is fitted.

With CEREC, preparation, scanning, design, milling and fitting all happen in one sitting. For many patients this means fewer trips, one round of local anaesthetic instead of two, and no period of wearing a temporary crown that can loosen or chip. That said, a single longer visit is not right for everyone, and some cases are still handled with a laboratory-made restoration. Your dentist will explain which pathway suits your tooth.

What are the three parts of the CEREC system?

The CEREC system works through three connected components:

A digital scanner. A handheld camera, such as the Primescan, captures the shape of the prepared tooth and the teeth around it.

Design software. Your dentist uses it to shape the crown and check the bite on screen.

A milling unit. A machine, such as the Primemill, carves the restoration from a ceramic block.

Because the parts work together digitally, the crown design moves from screen to milling unit without a physical model being poured or posted.

Why is a digital scan different from a traditional impression?

One of the changes patients often mention is the end of impression trays. Traditional impressions use trays filled with silicone or alginate. They can trigger a gag reflex in some people, can be uncomfortable to hold in place, and can occasionally distort if you move or breathe at the wrong moment. A distorted impression can lead to a crown that needs adjusting or remaking.

A digital intraoral scanner records the surfaces of your teeth as thousands of measurements and builds them into a three-dimensional model. You do not have to bite into a tray or hold your breath. The operator can see on screen as the scan builds, and can add to any area that needs more detail before design work starts. The result is a record of your tooth that is quick to take and, for many people, comfortable.

The digital model is also a lasting record. It can be stored and compared with future scans, which can help your dentist keep an eye on changes in your bite or wear over time.

What are CEREC crowns made from?

CEREC restorations are typically milled from dental ceramic such as lithium disilicate or zirconia. These materials are metal-free and are designed to reflect light in a way that resembles natural tooth enamel. Being metal-free means there is no dark metal margin at the gumline, and it avoids concerns for people who are sensitive to metals. These ceramics have been studied in clinical research for many years, although no restoration lasts forever and longevity depends on your bite, your habits and your home care.

A laboratory ceramist builds a crown by hand in layers, while the CEREC unit mills a crown from a single block. For many single-tooth restorations, a milled crown is a suitable and efficient choice. For complex cases, such as several teeth at once or situations that call for detailed custom colour work, your dentist may recommend a laboratory-made restoration instead.

What other digital technology do we use alongside CEREC?

CEREC is one part of the digital technology across our practices. We use digital X-rays, including OPG (orthopantomogram) images that show a panoramic view of the upper and lower jaws and that appear on screen straight away so your dentist can go through them with you. If more detailed imaging is needed, for example when planning implants or assessing impacted teeth, your dentist will explain why and arrange a referral.

Intraoral cameras and digital scanning are used across our clinics for diagnosis and records as well as for restorations. Technology does not decide the quality of care by itself. What matters is that your dentist uses the information to give you clear advice. You can read more in our article on digital dentistry, OPG X-rays and intraoral scanning .

What does same-day mean in practice?

If you are considering a crown, the practical points are simple. You will need to set aside a longer appointment than usual, often somewhere around ninety minutes to two hours, to allow time for preparation, scanning, design, milling and fitting. That is longer than a single traditional appointment, but usually shorter than the two appointments added together, and you leave without a temporary.

A single visit can suit people with busy schedules, people who find dental visits stressful and prefer fewer of them, and people with an upcoming event, trip or work commitment that makes a gap between appointments inconvenient. Ask your Core Dental dentist whether your tooth is suitable. Many single-crown cases can be treated this way, but some teeth, bites or existing restorations call for a different approach.

Who may not be suited to a same-day crown?

Your dentist may suggest a different pathway if a tooth has very little healthy structure left, if the bite or the surrounding teeth need work first, if infection or gum disease needs to be treated before a crown is placed, or if several teeth need to be restored together. Grinding and clenching habits also matter, because they place heavy load on ceramic, and a night guard may be recommended to protect your crown. These are decisions for your dentist after an examination and, where needed, X-rays.

What does a same-day crown cost?

The fee depends on the tooth, the material and the work needed to prepare it, so we quote before treatment starts. We offer interest-free payment plans through Payright (0% interest, fortnightly instalments over 3 to 30 months, plans up to $20,000, subject to eligibility: 18 or over, Australian permanent resident, ID, verifiable email and mobile) and TLC loans ($2,001 to $50,000 over up to 84 months, with the rate set by credit assessment). Figures published as at September 2026, confirm when you book. Many private health funds provide a rebate for crowns depending on your level of cover, and we claim on-site with HICAPS.

How can we help?

If you are thinking about a crown, an inlay or an onlay, our team can talk you through your options. CEREC is offered at Epping , South Melbourne and Caroline Springs . If a tooth is cracked or painful, tell us when you call, because we keep appointments for emergencies each day where possible. Call 13 13 16 or book online, and read our guide to same-day crowns with CEREC .

What did the traditional crown sequence actually involve?

If you have needed a crown in the past, you probably remember the process, and the number of appointments was only part of it.

The first appointment prepared the tooth, took an impression and fitted a temporary crown. The second appointment, assuming the permanent crown came back from the laboratory looking right and fitting correctly, involved removing the temporary, cementing the permanent crown, checking the bite and sending you home. Sometimes there was a third appointment if something needed adjustment.

That sequence worked, and it is still the right approach for some cases. It also required multiple visits, involved a waiting period that could be inconvenient or anxiety-provoking, and carried two specific risks: that the temporary crown might come off, or that the permanent one might need adjustment once it arrived.

How long does the scan take, and what can the dentist see?

The scan takes a minute or two and creates a precise three-dimensional model on screen that the dentist can rotate, zoom into and measure.

Two things follow from that which an impression cannot offer. The operator can see on screen, in real time, whether any area of the scan needs to be supplemented, so a gap is filled immediately rather than discovered later. And the final model is available for checking accuracy before any design work begins.

Why does a distorted impression matter so much?

Because the error does not announce itself, and the options once it has happened are both poor.

Traditional impression material can distort slightly as it sets. A distorted impression means a crown that does not fit as precisely as it should, and that leaves two outcomes: a remake, which costs time and another appointment, or cement masking a marginal discrepancy, which is the outcome nobody wants because the margin is where decay starts again.

A digital scan removes that failure mode rather than managing it, which is the main reason scanning has replaced impressions for this work.

What other digital imaging sits alongside CEREC?

Three systems, used for different questions.

Digital OPG imaging provides a full-mouth panoramic X-ray with a fraction of the radiation of older analogue systems, and the image is immediately available on screen to review with you.

3D CBCT imaging provides three-dimensional views of the jaw, teeth, sinuses and bone structure. It is important for implant planning, for assessing impacted teeth, and for diagnosing conditions that two-dimensional X-rays can miss.

Intraoral scanners are used across multiple Core Dental locations not only for CEREC crown design, but for orthodontic records, study models and general diagnostic purposes.

Taken together, these mean a patient attending today receives diagnostic imaging and restorative care at a standard that was not available in general dental practice a generation ago.

Is a same-day crown the right choice for you?

The practical considerations are reasonably straightforward, and they come down to three questions.

How much time are you in the chair? More than a typical single appointment, but less than two appointments combined, and in one sitting rather than spread over a fortnight.

Is your case a single-tooth restoration? For most single-tooth crown cases, a chairside-milled restoration is an efficient solution. For complex multi-tooth restorations, or cases requiring highly customised characterisation by a ceramist, our in-house Smile Lab may still be involved.

Does your tooth suit it? Not every tooth does. Where there is insufficient sound tooth structure, or where the gum condition needs attention first, your dentist will say so and explain the alternative.

Ask which approach your dentist recommends for your particular tooth and why. The answer should be about your tooth rather than about the technology.

Frequently asked questions

Is a CEREC crown permanent?

Yes. A CEREC crown is a finished ceramic restoration that is bonded or cemented to your tooth, not a temporary. Like any crown it can wear, chip or loosen over time, so regular check-ups and good home care matter. Your dentist can explain what to expect for your tooth.

Do I need an anaesthetic for a CEREC crown?

The tooth is usually prepared under local anaesthetic, as it is for a traditional crown, so you should not feel pain while it is shaped. The scanning, design and milling stages do not involve drilling. Please tell us if you feel anxious, and we will talk through ways to make you comfortable.

How long does a same-day crown appointment take?

As a general guide, allow around ninety minutes to two hours. That covers preparing the tooth, scanning, designing, milling and fitting the crown. The time varies with the tooth and the case, and your dentist or our reception team can give you an estimate when you book.

Can CEREC be used for veneers, inlays and onlays?

CEREC can be used to make crowns, inlays, onlays and veneers from ceramic. Whether it is suitable depends on your tooth and your goals. Your dentist will assess the tooth and explain whether a milled restoration or a laboratory-made one is the right fit.

Which Core Dental clinics offer CEREC?

We offer CEREC at our Epping, South Melbourne and Caroline Springs clinics. If your nearest clinic is a different one, call 13 13 16 and our team can tell you where to go and what to expect.

Is a digital scan safe?

An intraoral scanner uses a camera and light to capture the shape of your teeth. It does not use X-rays. Your dentist may still recommend X-rays as part of your examination when they are clinically needed, and we will explain why.

How long does the digital scan itself take?

A minute or two. It produces a three-dimensional model on screen that can be rotated, zoomed and measured, and any area that scanned poorly can be re-scanned there and then.

What goes wrong when an impression distorts?

Either the crown is remade, costing another appointment, or cement is used to mask a marginal discrepancy. The margin is where decay restarts, so neither outcome is good. A digital scan removes that failure mode rather than managing it.

How much radiation does a digital OPG involve?

A fraction of that from older analogue panoramic systems, and the image is available on screen immediately so it can be reviewed with you during the appointment.

Are intraoral scanners used for anything besides crowns?

Yes. Across Core Dental locations they are used for orthodontic records, study models and general diagnostic purposes as well as for CEREC crown design.

Related services and further reading

Dental crowns

What is a dental crown?

What should I know about dental crowns?

Same-day crowns with CEREC: how Core Dental does it in one visit

Digital dentistry at Core Dental

Emergency dentistry

General dentistry

Understanding your treatment

Core Dental at a glance

Nine Core Dental clinics across Melbourne: Southbank, South Melbourne, Caroline Springs, Carrum Downs, Epping, Wyndham, Berwick, Bayside and Glenferrie.

Open six days a week: Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm and Saturday mornings.

We quote before treatment starts, offer interest-free payment plans and claim from private health funds on-site with HICAPS.

Call 13 13 16 or book online.

Contact Core Dental

Phone	13 13 16
Booking	Online via coredental.com.au, or call 13 13 16
Hours	Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm, Saturday 8.00am to 1.30pm (Bayside Saturday 8.30am to 1.30pm), Sunday closed
Clinics	Southbank , South Melbourne , Caroline Springs , Carrum Downs , Epping , Wyndham , Berwick , Bayside , Glenferrie

Results, recovery times and potential risks vary for each individual. This information is general in nature and is intended for people over 18. Seek advice from a qualified, AHPRA-registered practitioner before proceeding.

What does CEREC stand for?

CEREC stands for Chairside Economical Restoration of Esthetic Ceramics. It is a CAD/CAM system from Dentsply Sirona that lets dentists at Core Dental design and mill ceramic crowns, inlays, onlays and veneers in the practice.

Which Core Dental clinics offer CEREC same-day crowns?

Core Dental offers CEREC at our Epping, South Melbourne and Caroline Springs clinics. Call 13 13 16 and our team will tell you which clinic suits you and whether your tooth is likely to be suitable.

How does a same-day crown differ from a traditional crown at Core Dental?

A traditional crown usually needs two visits about two weeks apart, with a temporary crown in between. With CEREC at Core Dental, scanning, design, milling and fitting happen in one longer appointment, when your dentist considers your tooth suitable.

What are the main parts of the CEREC system?

The system has a handheld digital scanner such as the Primescan, design software used by the dentist, and a milling unit such as the Primemill that carves the crown from a ceramic block. Our dentists use these together during a single visit.

What material is a CEREC crown made from?

CEREC restorations are typically milled from ceramic such as lithium disilicate or zirconia. These are metal-free materials. Your Core Dental dentist will recommend a material based on the tooth, the bite and the look you want.

How long should I set aside for a CEREC crown appointment?

As a general guide, set aside around ninety minutes to two hours at Core Dental for preparation, scanning, design, milling and fitting. Timing varies with the tooth, so ask our reception team for an estimate when you book.

Does Core Dental offer payment plans for crowns?

Yes. We quote before treatment starts and offer interest-free payment plans, including Payright over 3 to 30 months for plans up to $20,000, subject to eligibility. Figures published as at September 2026, confirm when you book.

How do I book a crown consultation at Core Dental?

Call Core Dental on 13 13 16 or book online through coredental.com.au. Tell us about your tooth and any pain, and we will arrange an examination so your dentist can explain whether a same-day crown is an option.