

Turkey Teeth: The Real Risks of Getting Veneers Overseas (And What We See When Patients Come Back) - Smile Solutions

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Turkey Teeth: The Real Risks of Getting Veneers Overseas (And What We See When Patients Come Back) - Smile Solutions Skip to content Book Appointment Now Our Services General Dentistry Dental Cleans and Hygienists Wisdom Teeth Emergency Dentistry Root Canal Tooth Fillings Chipped or Cracked Teeth TMD & Teeth Grinding Snoring & Sleep Apnoea Sport Mouthguards Dental Anxiety Cosmetic Dentistry Porcelain Veneers & Crowns Same Day Porcelain Veneers™ Composite Bonding Professional Teeth Whitening CEREC Restorations Invisalign No Braces All-on-4® Dental Implants Gummy Smile Complimentary Cosmetic Consultation Orthodontics Invisalign No Braces Orthodontic Braces Children's Braces and Invisalign Jaw Surgery Dental Implants All-on-4® Dental Implants Conventional & Immediate Implants Dental Bridges Bone Grafting For Implants Dentures Specialist Care Prosthodontists Oral & Maxillofacial Surgeons Periodontists Orthodontists Endodontists Paediatric Dentists Complex Dentistry Children's Dentistry First Visit To The Dentist Children's Dental Emergencies Children's Braces and Invisalign Child Dental Benefit Schedule Kids Teeth Cleaning Tips About Us Why Choose Us Our Team Our Location Technology Before & After Gallery Payment Plans Packages & Offers Contact Us Call Us 13 13 96 Dr Kia Pajouhesh 17 Jul 2026 Turkey Teeth: The Real Risks of Getting Veneers Overseas (And What We See When Patients Come Back) Dental tourism promises a dream smile at a fraction of the cost. Here is what the Instagram posts do not show you – and what we see in our clinic when things go wrong. The before-and-after photographs are irresistible. A young woman arrives at a gleaming clinic in Antalya with stained, slightly crooked teeth. Four days later, she is poolside at her hotel, beaming with a set of impossibly white, perfectly straight teeth. Total cost: a few thousand dollars, flights and accommodation included. The comments section is full of heart-eye emojis and “where did you go?!” questions. On social media, dental tourism – particularly to Turkey, but also Thailand, Bali, Mexico, and parts of Eastern Europe – looks like a no-brainer. Premium cosmetic dentistry at a fraction of Australian prices, combined with a holiday. What is not to love? The before-and-after photographs are irresistible. A young woman arrives at a gleaming clinic in Antalya with stained, slightly crooked teeth. Four days later, she is poolside at her hotel, beaming with a set of impossibly white, perfectly straight teeth. Total cost: a few thousand dollars, flights and accommodation included. The comments section is full of heart-eye emojis and “where did you go?!” questions. On social media, dental tourism – particularly to Turkey, but also Thailand, Bali, Mexico, and parts of Eastern Europe – looks like a no-brainer. Premium cosmetic dentistry at a fraction of Australian prices, combined with a holiday. What is not to love? What Are “Turkey Teeth”? “Turkey teeth” has become internet shorthand for the distinctive look produced by many dental tourism clinics: ultra-white, uniformly sized, Hollywood-style veneers or crowns that bear little resemblance to natural teeth. The term is not complimentary. It describes teeth that look obviously artificial – too white, too square, too uniform, and often too bulky for the patient's face. But the aesthetic concerns are the least of the problems. The real risks of turkey teeth are structural, biological, and often irreversible. What Actually Happens During Overseas Veneer Treatment To understand why things go wrong, you need to understand what typically happens during a dental tourism veneer procedure. The timeline is compressed. Most dental tourism packages schedule the entire process – consultation, preparation,

fabrication, and fitting – within three to five days. Patients fly in, have their teeth prepared on day one or two, receive their veneers on day four or five, and fly home. There is no time for careful planning, mock-ups, or staged treatment. The preparation is often aggressive. Here is the detail that many patients do not understand until it is too late: in order to place veneers or crowns quickly on teeth that may be slightly crooked or overlapping, many overseas clinics aggressively grind down healthy teeth. Rather than placing thin porcelain veneers over minimally prepared enamel, they shave teeth down to stumps and place full crowns. This is a critical distinction. A porcelain veneer removes 0.3mm to 0.7mm of enamel from the front surface of a tooth. A full crown removes tooth structure from all surfaces – front, back, sides, and biting surface – often reducing a healthy tooth to a thin peg. The amount of irreversible tooth destruction is vastly greater. The materials and standards vary. While there are excellent dental professionals in every country, the clinics that offer cut-rate prices often achieve those savings through lower-cost materials, high-volume production, and less experienced staff. Quality control standards, sterilisation protocols, and regulatory oversight vary significantly between countries. The communication is limited. Treatment is typically conducted through translators, with minimal time for detailed discussion about aesthetics, function, bite relationships, and long-term maintenance. Shade selection, tooth shape, and proportions are often decided by the clinic rather than collaboratively with the patient.

The Damage We See: Real Clinical Consequences At Smile Solutions, we regularly treat patients who have returned from overseas dental work with complications. These are the most common problems we encounter.

- Nerve Damage and Tooth Death** When a tooth is ground down excessively for a crown, the preparation can extend dangerously close to or into the dental pulp – the living tissue containing the tooth's nerve and blood supply. The consequences include:
 - Irreversible pulpitis:** The nerve becomes inflamed and begins to die, causing severe, throbbing pain that does not respond to painkillers.
 - Tooth necrosis:** The tooth dies completely, discolouring and becoming susceptible to infection. Required root canal treatment: Dead or dying teeth need root canal therapy, adding significant cost and complexity.
 - Possible tooth loss:** In severe cases, the tooth cannot be saved and must be extracted, requiring an implant or bridge.
- We have seen patients return with multiple teeth requiring root canals because of overly aggressive preparation. One patient in their twenties had 20 teeth crowned overseas and needed root canal treatment on six of them within the first year.
- Poor Fit and Marginal Gaps** Veneers and crowns must fit the underlying tooth with extreme precision. Gaps between the restoration and the tooth margin – even fractions of a millimetre – create harbours for bacteria, leading to:
 - Recurrent decay:** Bacteria colonise the gap, causing cavities underneath the crown or veneer where they are invisible and difficult to treat.
 - Gum disease:** Poorly fitting margins irritate the gum tissue, causing chronic inflammation, bleeding, and eventual gum recession.
 - Bad breath:** Bacterial accumulation around ill-fitting restorations produces persistent malodour that brushing and flossing cannot eliminate. These problems are insidious because they develop slowly. The teeth may look fine for the first year. By year two or three, the damage underneath is well established.
- Bite Problems and TMJ Disorders** A full set of crowns or veneers changes the way your teeth come together when you bite and chew. Getting this relationship right requires careful planning, precise fabrication, and detailed adjustment – processes that require time and expertise. When the bite is wrong, the consequences cascade:
 - Jaw pain and clicking:** Misaligned bite forces stress the temporomandibular joint (TMJ), causing pain, clicking, and restricted jaw movement.
 - Headaches and muscle tension:** Chronic bite imbalance can cause headaches, neck pain, and facial muscle fatigue.
 - Accelerated wear:** Teeth that meet incorrectly wear down faster, shortening the lifespan of the restorations.
 - Fractures:** Excessive force on poorly positioned restorations causes cracking and breakage.
- Aesthetic Failures** The “turkey teeth” look – while initially striking on social media – tends to age poorly. Common aesthetic problems include:
 - Unnatural colour:** Ultra-white shades that bear no relation to the patient's skin tone, age, or facial proportions.
 - Bulky appearance:** Crowns placed over inadequately prepared teeth can look thick and protruding, changing the lip profile and facial aesthetics.
 - Uniform appearance:** Every tooth the same shade, size, and shape, eliminating the natural variation that makes a smile look real.
 - Gum recession:** As gums recede (which they inevitably do to some degree), dark margins become visible at the gum line, revealing the boundary between crown and tooth.
 - Colour mismatch over time:** Porcelain does not change colour, but natural teeth do. If not all teeth were treated, the veneered teeth and natural teeth diverge in shade over time.
- No Recourse** When Things Go Wrong Perhaps the most

significant risk of dental tourism is the absence of recourse when problems arise. In Australia, dental practitioners are registered with AHPRA, bound by professional codes of conduct, required to carry professional indemnity insurance, and subject to complaints processes through the Dental Board of Australia. If your Australian dentist's work causes problems, you have clear pathways for resolution: direct discussion with the practitioner, formal complaints, insurance claims, and if necessary, legal action within the Australian jurisdiction. With overseas dental work, none of these protections apply. If your crowns fail six months after returning to Australia, your options are: Fly back to the overseas clinic at your own expense (assuming the clinic still exists and is willing to see you) Find an Australian dentist to repair or redo the work , at full Australian prices Accept the outcome Most patients choose the second option. And the cost of redoing failed overseas work is almost always greater than the cost of having it done properly in Australia in the first place. The true cost comparison Dental tourism marketing relies on a simple price comparison: "Veneers in Australia cost \$1,500 to \$2,500 per tooth. In Turkey, they cost \$250 to \$400 per tooth. You save thousands!" This comparison ignores several realities: Overseas clinics often crown every tooth, not just the visible ones. A patient who might need six veneers in Australia may receive 20 full crowns overseas, because it is faster and easier to crown everything than to selectively veneer. The hidden costs add up. Flights, accommodation, travel insurance, time off work, and the follow-up dental care needed when you return all erode the apparent savings. Remedial work is expensive. If overseas veneers fail – and our experience suggests failure rates are significantly higher than for quality Australian work – the cost of remediation in Australia easily exceeds the original saving. Removing failed crowns, performing root canals, placing implants for teeth that could not be saved, and fabricating new restorations can cost tens of thousands of dollars. The irreversible cost is the highest. A tooth that has been ground down to a stump for a full crown can never go back to being a healthy, intact tooth. That natural tooth structure is gone forever. No amount of money can restore it. What we tell patients who are considering dental tourism We do not judge patients who are exploring overseas options. Dental care in Australia is expensive, and the appeal of significant savings is entirely understandable. But we do encourage patients to consider several things: Ask what is actually being proposed. Are you getting thin porcelain veneers bonded to minimally prepared teeth, or full crowns over aggressively ground-down stumps? The distinction matters enormously. Ask about the ceramist. Who is making your veneers? What is their training? Will you meet them? Can you see their portfolio of previous work? Ask about follow-up care. What happens if a veneer debonds in six months? If you develop sensitivity? If the bite does not feel right? Who do you see, and who pays? Ask about guarantees – and read the fine print. Many overseas clinics offer "lifetime guarantees" that require you to return to the clinic for any warranty work. A guarantee is worthless if exercising it costs you a return flight and a week off work. Understand what you are trading. The savings are real, but so are the risks. You are trading the regulatory protections of the Australian system, the ongoing care relationship with a local dentist, the ability to address problems quickly, and often a significant amount of irreplaceable natural tooth structure. Dr Yasmin Coulthard (DEN0001023302). Registered Dentist, General Registration. A better path forward If cost is the primary barrier to getting the smile you want, there are options worth exploring before booking an overseas flight: Payment plans and financing. Many Australian practices, including Smile Solutions, offer interest-free payment plans and dental financing options that make treatment more accessible. Staged treatment. Rather than doing everything at once, treatment can be phased over months or years, spreading the cost. Health fund optimisation. Understanding your health fund coverage and timing treatment to maximise benefits can reduce out-of-pocket costs. Prioritised treatment. A good cosmetic dentist can help you identify which teeth will make the biggest aesthetic impact, allowing you to start with a smaller number of veneers and add more over time. Your teeth are irreplaceable. They are worth protecting with care that you can trust, from professionals you can return to, in a system that holds them accountable. If you have overseas dental work that is causing problems, or if you are considering dental tourism and want an honest second opinion, we are here to help. Contact Us

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