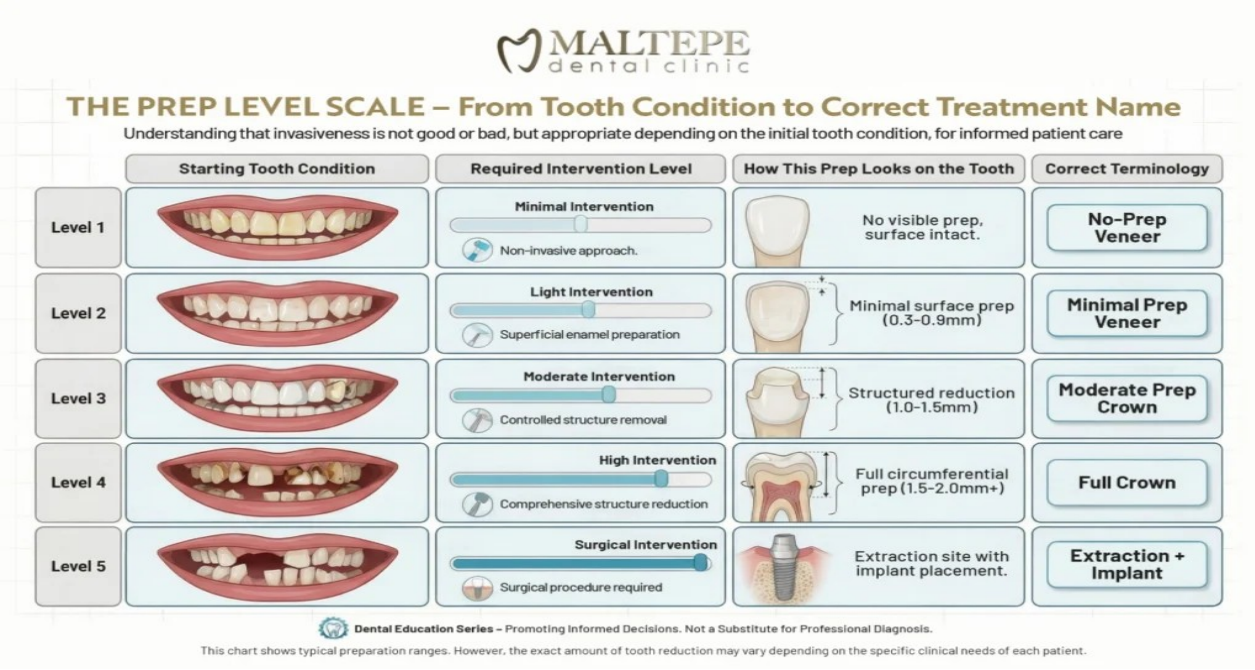

Maltepe Dental Clinic Introduces Tooth Prep Level Scale to Standardize Dental Treatment Communication

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Maltepe Dental Clinic has introduced the Tooth Prep Level Scale, a five-level framework that classifies dental procedures by the amount of natural tooth structure removed during treatment rather than by procedure name alone. The system was developed to address a documented pattern in which patients arrive requesting treatments more invasive than their clinical condition requires ? and in which ambiguous terminology leaves patients uncertain about what they are actually receiving.

The dental clinic, which has served patients from more than 85 countries over its 24-year history, developed the scale after identifying a recurring disconnect in pre-treatment consultations. Patients frequently request full-coverage crowns or implants when their teeth are structurally sound and clinically suitable for minimally invasive veneer placement. In cases involving significant terminology confusion, patients have arrived requesting 24 implants for teeth that required no structural removal at all. Informal labels such as "full veneer" ? a term sometimes used interchangeably with crown ? have further compounded this confusion by obscuring what a procedure actually involves.

Rather than asking patients to learn and correctly apply clinical vocabulary, the Tooth Prep Level Scale

replaces procedure names with a single measurable reference point: how much of the natural tooth will be prepared. In addition to the name of the treatments, patients are also informed of the preparation level their tooth condition requires, and can reference physical tooth models during preliminary consultations to understand what that level looks like in practice.

The scale defines five levels. Level 1 requires no removal of natural tooth structure and corresponds to a No-Prep Veneer. Level 2 involves superficial enamel preparation of 0.3 to 0.9 millimeters and corresponds to a Minimal Prep Veneer. Level 3 involves controlled structure reduction of 1.0 to 1.5 millimeters and corresponds to a Moderate Prep Crown. Level 4 involves comprehensive circumferential preparation of 1.5 to 2.0 millimeters or more and corresponds to a Full Crown. Level 5 involves surgical intervention and corresponds to Extraction and Implant placement.

Internal data collected from 2023 to 2025 showed that many patients initially requested treatments based on end results and terms they had heard from friends, social media, or previous cases?such as Hollywood Smile, zirconium crowns, or even implants?without necessarily knowing which treatment they actually needed. Upon clinical assessment, 58 percent of patients who first asked for full-coverage crowns or more invasive procedures were found to have structurally sound teeth suitable for minimally invasive veneer placement, and in some cases even non-prep options.

Peer-reviewed research published by the National Institutes of Health indicates that international dental patients frequently receive limited pre-treatment information, which can affect their ability to make fully informed decisions. A separate NIH-indexed study found that 65 percent of patients could not accurately interpret the term "interim removable dental prosthesis," and 60 percent were unfamiliar with "fixed dental prosthesis." The FDI World Dental Federation requires practitioners to explain all treatment alternatives in full and to acknowledge each patient's right to a second opinion before any procedure begins. The British Dental Journal has similarly recommended plain language as standard practice, noting that clinical terminology routinely creates barriers to patient understanding.

Maltepe Dental Clinic uses the framework during preliminary dental procedure classification assessments to align patient expectations with clinical findings before travel or treatment is confirmed.

"Different procedures carry very different implications for the natural tooth, and patients benefit from understanding those differences before making a decision," said Dr. Yusuf Ilhan, lead dentist of Maltepe Dental Clinic. "The Tooth Prep Level Scale gives our clinical team a consistent reference point to explain treatment options in terms patients can evaluate clearly, particularly when comparing procedures that appear similar in name but differ substantially in preparation."

Maltepe Dental Clinic operates with international certifications, including ISO 9001:2015, ISO 13485:2016, and ISO 10002:2018, maintaining an in-house laboratory for enhanced customization. The clinic utilizes internationally recognized implant brands, including Straumann, MegaGen, ICX, and Hiossen, maintaining a 4.8 Google review rating and 4.9 Trustpilot score based on hundreds of patient reviews dating back to the 2010s.

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Maltepe Dental Clinic

Maltepe Dental Clinic delivers world-class dental care, backed by over 22 years of expertise, cutting-edge technology, and a dedicated team, serving patients in Istanbul and at our London consultation office.

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