

Root Canal Treatment Post-Operative Instructions

Congratulations! By saving your tooth with root canal treatment, you have made a significant step towards better oral health. This guide is intended to answer questions you may have about the post-operative period and to give you information on how to preserve the health of your tooth following root canal treatment.

The purpose of the root canal treatment is to remove diseased tissue from inside of the root and seal the root end. Depending on each case, endodontic treatment may be completed in one, two or three appointments. Once started, it is important to complete the root canal therapy.

What to expect:

After your root canal therapy has been completed:

The root canal system inside your tooth has been thoroughly cleaned, and the irritated tissue and bacteria that have caused you to need root canal treatment are gone.

- Discomfort or soreness in the area is normal for a few days (or even weeks) and range from mild to severe. This occurs because of existing infection and inflammation of the gum and tooth ligaments as well as the manipulation of the tooth during treatment.
- You may also feel some tenderness in your jaw from keeping it open for an extended period of time during the treatment.
- The gums may be sore and the tooth is often tender to biting or chewing.
- Avoid eating, biting your lip, cheek, and tongue while anesthetized (numb) since this may cause damage to them.

- These symptoms are temporary and usually respond very well to over-the-counter pain medications. It is important for you to follow the instructions on how to take these medications. Avoid aspirin and aspirin based products to eliminate the risk of blood thinning if any bleeding occurs. Remember that narcotic medications, if prescribed, may make you drowsy, and caution should be exercised in operating machinery or driving a car after taking them.
- Rinsing with warm salt water (1 teaspoon of salt per glass of warm water) will help.
- Discomfort in the area in no way affects the successful outcome of treatment.
- Contact your doctor if you experience any of the following: your bite feels uneven, a visible swelling inside or outside of your mouth, an allergic reaction to medication.
- Be careful in chewing on your tooth until it has been restored with a crown.

Temporary Filling:

A temporary filling has been placed in the entry made into your tooth. It is normal for a thin layer of the temporary filling to be chewed away between appointments. An unusual taste can be expected. Should all of the temporary filling come out, please call our clinic. It is important that your temporary filling stays intact until the placement of a permanent restoration.

Final Restorations:

IF AN APPOINTMENT TO PLACE A FINAL RESTORATION HAS NOT BEEN MADE, PLEASE TELEPHONE TO SCHEDULE THIS APPOINTMENT PROMPTLY.

Endodontically treated teeth have been weakened by previous decay and fillings. It is necessary for these teeth to receive additional protection in the form of a cast restoration (onlay or crown). This will protect these teeth against future fracture and decay, and protect the root canal filling from possible contamination. Delay in obtaining a final restoration may result in fracture and/or possible loss of the tooth or require a retreatment or a root canal.

What the Future holds

The tooth that has had appropriate root canal treatment followed by a proper restoration can last as long as your other natural teeth. After the tooth has been restored, make sure to practice good oral hygiene, including brushing, flossing, regular dental examinations and preventative cleanings. We may periodically take a radiograph of the tooth to ensure that healing has occurred.

If you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to call our clinic for consultation.