



The Endodontic Group, Inc.

WHAT TO EXPECT DURING AND AFTER YOUR ROOT CANAL

Length of treatment and number of appointments:

The length of a root canal procedure varies depending on the type, condition, infection and drainage of the tooth. The procedure usually takes between one and three separate visits. Because the x-ray does not provide all the necessary information, your endodontist may not be able to tell you exactly how many appointments your procedure will take until well into the treatment of the tooth. Therefore, predicting exactly how long you will be here is impossible. We respect your schedule but also want to provide you and every other patient, a carefully done root canal. If you would like a pamphlet explaining the procedure please ask the front desk or your dental assistant.

Discomfort is common

After any dental procedure some discomfort is expected. The majority of the time discomfort is mild to moderate, and subsides after a few days. If you experience pain that gets worse each day, or if you have facial swelling that increases after treatment, please call the office.

Medications

You may be given pain medicine. If so, read the instructions on how often to take it, and do not exceed this frequency or the instructed amount. Do not drive while you are taking a narcotic pain medicine. If you have been given antibiotics, take them as directed until they are all gone. The only reason to stop taking the antibiotic is if you get diarrhea or have an allergic reaction (rash, hives, difficulty breathing). If this occurs, please call our office and let us know that you have discontinued the prescription and why. If you have a life threatening reaction to any medication, call 911. Always read the inserts that are given by the pharmacy and follow the instructions. If you have any questions about drug interactions, the pharmacist can help or you can call our office prior to taking the medicine.

Healing

Root canal treatment usually has a high rate of success. In a small number of cases, the tooth doesn't respond to treatment. In these cases, more treatment may be necessary or the tooth may need to be extracted (pulled). Our goal is for you to be able to chew without pain. Your tooth may always feel "different" than it did prior to your infection or different than the other teeth around it. It may be sensitive when you tap on it from the side, even after your root canal is complete. Sometimes when the bone and ligament around your tooth heal, scar tissue may remain. Because you are the only one who knows how your tooth feels, it is up to you to decide if the sensation you are feeling is something that needs further attention. If you have questions or would like us to see you for another exam and x-ray please call and schedule an appointment. There may be a charge for the office visit depending on the situation.

Eating

After your root canal procedure, the ligament that holds your tooth in the bone may be inflamed. This is what usually causes soreness. If possible, stay away from hard and crunchy foods, and foods that take strong jaw forces to chew for the first week. This will allow the ligament to start to heal without being bruised again. Slowly introduce harder foods in the next few weeks.

Your tooth and the new filling

After each appointment, some type of filling (temporary or permanent) is placed in the access opening that was made to get to the roots of your tooth. If it is a temporary filling, it might sink or cave in slightly. If it does, do not worry. After a root canal the tooth is slightly weaker than before the initial problem. If you don't have a crown already on the tooth, you may need one to avoid tooth fracture. Your family dentist will do this. Confirm with your dentist if further treatment for your tooth is necessary. If the root canal was performed through an existing crown, make sure you know if the filling that is placed is temporary or if it is permanent. If it is a temporary, you will need to return to your family dentist for permanent filling placement.

Report and Recall

A report of the treatment along with a copy of the x-ray will be sent to your dentist so that your chart may be updated at their office. Also, in a few weeks to months, you may receive a card from us in the mail asking you to return to our office for a follow up x-ray to evaluate healing. If you do, please call to schedule an appointment.

Thank you

We appreciate the opportunity to treat you. We strive to provide expert endodontic treatment with the latest technology so that you have the best chance to keep your natural tooth as long as possible.