

Post-Operative Instructions Following Root Canal Therapy

1. Your anesthesia will wear off in approximately 1-3 hours after the procedure. It is very important not to chew on the numb side (to prevent biting tongue, lip, etc.) until the anesthesia wears off.
2. **DISCOMFORT....** You should expect to experience mild to moderate discomfort following the procedure. It is NORMAL for the tooth to be uncomfortable for several days up to a couple of weeks. Sometimes, depending on the circumstances, the and surrounding tissues may remain sore for several weeks. **WHAT DO I ABOUT THE DISCOMFORT???** We recommend you take: 800 mg Ibuprofen (4 over the counter pills of Advil or Motrin or generic equivalent) every 6-8 hours for the next 2 days. If you are unable to take Ibuprofen then take 1000 mg Acetaminophen (2 extra strength Tylenol or generic equivalent) every 6-8 hours for the next 2 days. 90% of the time this is enough to handle the discomfort. If it is not. please contact our office.
3. **IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO HAVE A PERMANENT FILLING AND/OR CROWN PLACED ON YOUR TOOTH WITHIN 1 MONTH OF THE ROOT CANAL BEING COMPLETED.** If this is not done, the tooth is very likely to fracture or to develop new decay underneath the temporary filling which may cause your root canal to fail.
4. **DO NOT** use the tooth to bite down on anything hard (peanuts, pretzels, ice, etc.) until the permanent filling and/or crown has been placed on the tooth. **AGAIN,** the tooth is prone to fracture and if you bite down on anything too hard or crunchy you may crack or fracture the tooth.
5. If you had a temporary filling placed and the temporary filling falls out please contact our office. If this happens when our office is closed we recommend you purchase some temporary filling material from any pharmacy and place a dab in the tooth until you have an opportunity to see us at our office.
6. If you are given any prescription medications related to this treatment please take them as prescribed by our office until the medication is completed.
7. You may brush and floss your tooth as normal unless otherwise instructed by your doctor.
8. Once the anesthetic has worn off and you feel that the tooth that was treated feels high/uneven please give our office a call immediately. This imbalance with your bite may cause further discomfort and should be adjusted.

PLEASE READ THIS LAST SECTION, IT IS VERY IMPORTANT

FLARE-UPS

Although about 95% of root canals cause very little to no discomfort after the treatment is completed, there are about 5% of cases which can cause significant discomfort. These are commonly referred to as "flare-ups". They mostly often occur on badly infected teeth, teeth that are extremely irritated, or teeth that have a history or prior treatment. Sometimes, however, they occur randomly, even on patients that have had several root canals previously without problems.

If you have a flare-up you may experience moderate to severe discomfort, swelling (can get as large as a golf ball), bruising, throbbing, and generalized discomfort, which usually begins a few hours after treatment and may last 2-3 days.

Please contact our office if you experience any of these symptoms and we will do everything we possibly can to get you relief. You may be prescribed antibiotics, a different pain medication, or a steroid. **Should you experience any of these symptoms please contact our office.**

SOME HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS....

1. Following your appointment, rinse frequently with warm salt water (1 tablespoon of salt in full 8 oz. glass of warm water). Hold over the tooth that was treated and swish for 1-2 minutes
2. Eat a balanced diet. Your body needs nourishment for proper healing.
3. **DO NOT** take medications on an empty stomach unless specifically directed. If you do this could lead to vomiting and/or an upset stomach.