

## Post Op Instructions for Root Canal Therapy

Root canal therapy disinfects the inside of the root of an infected tooth. Since everyone heals differently, it is hard to predict what your experience will be.

The following instructions are meant to guide you through the healing phase as comfortable as possible.

- Your lip tongue, and cheek may be numb for several hours. During this time, be careful to not bite, chew, scratch or pinch the area.
- If you are given any prescription medications related to this treatment, please take them as instructed by your doctor.
- Gingival irritation/minor ulceration is normal for several days after the procedure. Gently rinsing the inside of your mouth in the area of the treatment several times a day with warm salt water may help relieve mild irritation of the gum around the tooth.
- Discomfort/ dull ache in the area is normal following the root canal. It is normal for the tooth to be uncomfortable for several days after today's treatment. Even if you were not experiencing pain prior to treatment, you may have discomfort or a dull ache after the root canal.

**DO NOT** use the tooth to bite down on anything hard (peanuts, pretzels, ice, etc.) until the permanent filling/crown has been placed on the tooth. The tooth is prone to fracture and if you bite down on anything too hard or crunchy you may crack the tooth. If a tooth is cracked it may be non-restorable and require extraction.

- If your bite feels high or you cannot close your mouth without pain, please let us know so that your bite can be adjusted.
- If you were instructed to return to your general dentist for the permanent restoration/crown please do so as soon as possible. Temporary filling material can leak and cause the canal system to become contaminated and require retreatment of the root canal.
- You may floss and brush your tooth as normal, unless told otherwise by the doctor.

The following regimen is recommended to control post-operative discomfort. These medications are available over-the-counter at any pharmacy of your choice. We recommend taking 400mg of Ibuprofen or Advil every 6 hours by mouth, and 1000mg of Acetaminophen (Tylenol) every 6 hours by mouth. You will be alternating these two medications every 3 hours. For example, if you take Advil at 9:00 am in the morning, the next dose will be Tylenol at 12:00 pm, then Advil at 3:00 pm, and so on. You may not exceed 3200mg of Ibuprofen or 3000mg of Acetaminophen per day (adult maximum daily dose). If you can sleep through the night, you do not have to wake up to take your medications. We recommend following this regimen for 48 hours after completion of the root canal treatment.

**FLARE-UPS:** Although most root canals cause very little to no discomfort after the treatment is completed, there are some cases which can cause significant pain. These are commonly referred to as "flare-ups." They mostly occur on badly infected teeth, teeth that are extremely irritated, or teeth that have a history of prior treatment. Sometimes, however, they occur randomly, even on patients that have had several root canals done previously without any problems. If you have a flare-up you may experience moderate to severe pain, swelling, bruising, throbbing, and general discomfort, which usually begins a few hours after treatment and may last 2 to 3 days. Please contact our office if you experience any of these symptoms. You may be prescribed antibiotics, stronger pain medication, a steroid, and/or you may be asked to come to the office to receive further therapy.

Should you experience any of these symptoms or have any concerns, please contact the office and speak to one of our team members.