

OPEN & AFFORDABLE DENTAL BRACES

POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR ROOT CANALS

A root canal eliminates the source causes of the infection, which is the ability of bacteria to move down the tooth canals and into your jaw. Even though the source cause of the infection has been taken care of, there might be some residual infection around the tooth. Your immune system will now have the ability to remove that infection. It is imperative you discuss with your doctor the need for a crown. Most teeth excluding some anterior teeth that have received root canals need a full coverage crown to reduce the chance of future fracture of the tooth. The root canal access hole weakened the tooth. Although historically root canals are 95%+ effective, there are some reasons your root canal will not resolve the infection. If your tooth is cracked, if all of the canals were not located, or if the canals were unable to be completely sealed, the root canal may not completely heal. Discuss with your doctor if your symptoms never completely resolve. It is very important to maintain your follow up cleanings twice a year to monitor the status of any dentistry and your dentition.

- PAIN MANAGEMENT.** It's normal to experience some discomfort or mild pain for a few days after the procedure. Over-the-counter pain relievers such as ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) or acetaminophen (Tylenol) can help manage this. Follow the instructions below to reduce pain.
- ANTIBIOTICS.** Antibiotics are only recommended if you have postoperative systemic infection. Discuss with your provider if you want or do not want antibiotics. If you have a fever or increased swelling, please call the office. Frequent and unnecessary antibiotic use creates antibiotic resistance, a serious condition. Go to an urgent care or emergency room if you experience trouble breathing.
- ORAL HYGIENE.** Maintain your regular oral hygiene routine, but be gentle around the treated tooth. Brush and floss as usual, but avoid the area immediately around the tooth for the first 24 hours if it's sore. Rinse your mouth with warm salt water (1/2 teaspoon of salt in 8 ounces of warm water) 2-3 times a day to help reduce discomfort and keep the area clean.
- SWELLING.** Some swelling or bruising may occur, but it should subside within a few days. Apply an ice bag or chopped ice wrapped in a towel to the root canal area, (10 minutes on and 10 minutes off) for 4-5 hours.
- DISCOMFORT.** Mild to average discomfort, use the prescribed medication found below. For severe pain that doesn't subside after 48 hours, call our office.
- FOOD.** Avoid eating hard, sticky, or chewy foods until the numbness from the anesthesia wears off and until you have restored the tooth with a final restoration (crown). This will help prevent damage to the tooth and avoid accidental injury to your mouth. Stick to soft foods and avoid chewing on the treated side until your dentist confirms that the tooth is fully restored.
- INFECTION.** If an antibiotic has been prescribed for you, complete the prescribed regime. Take it 2 hours after the pain pill, so if one upsets your stomach, you will know which one it was. If you have been prescribed a prescription rinse, use it twice a day like Listerine. If you were provided a syringe, use it to power wash the extraction site only with continued pain 48 hours after the extraction.

PAIN MANAGEMENT FOR DENTAL PROCEDURES

Studies and experience have shown that the following pain management regime is the most effective for post operative dental pain. If you have allergies or contraindications to any of the following, take only the other drug and discuss with your healthcare provider. The following should be taken every 8 hours **at the same time** for 10 days or until the pain is gone. You may purchase these over the counter. There is no need for a prescription.

- 500 mg Acetaminophen (Extra Strength Tylenol). Take every 8 hours for 10 days or until pain is gone.
 - * It is contraindicated to take Acetaminophen (Tylenol) if you have liver problems. Do not exceed 3000 mg per 24 hours.
- 400 mg Ibuprofen (Two 200 mg pills). Take every 8 hours for 10 days or until pain is gone. Do not exceed 1200 mg per 24 hours.
 - * It is contraindicated to take Ibuprofen if you are pregnant, have kidney disease, ulcers, heart conditions, using anticoagulants, or have coagulation (bleeding) issues.