

# Post-Operative Instructions after Root Canal

Please follow the instructions outlined below, and contact us should any questions

DO NOT eat or drink anything for the next half hour. DO NOT try to feel around your tooth with your tongue. You may want to place an ice pack over the area where the procedure was done for an hour to minimize the swelling.

- You need to have a permanent filling or a crown placed on your tooth within 1 MONTH of the root canal being completed. It is essential for you to follow up with your regular dentist to complete this procedure. 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. You will be responsible for all costs incurred if you fail to follow this instruction.
- 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. Again, the tooth is prone to fracture and if you bite down on anything too hard or crunchy you may crack the tooth. Avoid very hot or cold foods during the healing process. Also, avoid chewing stick foods, especially gum.
- Some minor discomfort in the area is normal following the root canal. It is normal for the tooth to be uncomfortable for 2-3 days after today's treatment. Sometimes, depending on the circumstances, the tooth and surrounding tissues may remain sore for a few weeks post treatment. The three most common reasons for pain are:
  - o Sore jaw joint from having your mouth open for a prolonged time.
  - o Sore gum from the rubber dam placement.
  - o Sore muscle from the injection site.

## WHAT DO I DO ABOUT THE PAIN?

All of the above scenarios should be handled with over the counter medication, primarily. We recommend you take:

- 600 mg Ibuprofen (3 over the counter pills of Advil or Motrin or generic equivalent) every 6 hours for the next 2 days.  
OR (if unable to take ibuprofen)
- 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 and we will ensure you are comfortable. DO NOT take aspirin or aspirin-containing products, as they tend to increase bleeding from the area that was treated.
- If you are given any prescription medications related to this treatment please take them as instructed by your doctor. If antibiotics are prescribed, continue to take them for the indicated length of time, even if all symptoms and signs of infection are gone.

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 pain. 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. Please contact us if you experience moderate to severe pain, swelling, bruising, throbbing, after treatment that lasts for 2 to 3 days.



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