

Mouth Matters

Dorion on Dentistry



What to Expect During and After Root Canal Treatment

Root canal treatment involves the removal of the pulp (nerves and blood vessels) from the inside of the inflamed, infected or dead tooth in order to prevent it from becoming a source of continuing infection. Unfortunately many people mistakenly assume that this is a very painful procedure. This may be due to the fact that often times people who are experiencing a severe toothache need a root canal in order to eliminate the infection that is causing their pain. However, with modern techniques

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in local anaesthesia it is extremely rare for anyone to have pain during the procedure. In fact, some people have actually fallen asleep in the chair while being treated!

The treatment may involve two or more visits to complete since it is important that the inside of the tooth be thoroughly prepared, disinfected and then filled with a non-irritating material. The number of visits needed will be determined by such things as the severity of infection when treatment is started, the number of roots present and calcified obstructions inside the roots. It is not uncommon to have slight sensitivity or a mild ache between visits and for a short period after completion of the treatment. If this occurs it can usually

be managed with medication that the doctor will recommend or prescribe for you.

Root canal treatment has a very high success rate and has the benefit of allowing you to keep teeth that would otherwise need to be extracted. However, as in any medical procedure complications may arise. These may include calcification of a portion of the root preventing complete cleansing of the

canal, breakage within the root of one of the tiny files used in the preparation process or cracks in the tooth if it has been seriously

weakened. Occasionally, a tooth that has been treated will become re-infected and need either re-treatment or removal. Any of these things could lead to the need for a more extensive surgical approach or extraction of the tooth.

It is often recommended that when a tooth has received root canal treatment that it be restored with a full crown to preserve the structural integrity of the tooth and to help ensure that the tooth can provide many years, perhaps even a lifetime of service.

If you have any questions about your treatment please feel free to ask your dentist because ... "your mouth matters".

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