

After Your Endodontic Treatment

Your endodontic (root canal) treatment will allow you to maintain your tooth and will relieve the pain you may have been experiencing. Please avoid biting on the tooth or drinking hot beverages for 1 hour after your appointment so your temporary or permanent filling may harden. Also, be careful not to bite your cheek or tongue while you are numb. If your tooth needs a crown, it is best to avoid chewing on it until you can see your family dentist. Failure to visit your dentist in a timely manner (within four weeks) for the restoration may result in a non-restorable fracture or re-infection of the tooth, requiring additional treatments or extraction. If the tooth already has a crown, we may have placed a permanent filling at the time of treatment. If you are unsure whether you have a temporary or permanent filling, call our office to see if you need to return to your family dentist for any restorative work.

Will I have discomfort after the treatment?

The infection of the pulp of a tooth causes inflammation in the tissues surrounding your roots. Cleaning of the root canals may aggravate this condition and it is normal to experience some discomfort for a period (7-10 days) following treatment. If your tooth hurt before you came in for treatment, it may take longer to feel normal again. Most discomfort is mild and controlled with over the counter medications. Should you have pain that you cannot tolerate and/or visible swelling or fever, please call our office. We may suggest medication or other steps to make you more comfortable. It is normal for some teeth to feel “different” when you tap on them for up to six months after endodontic treatment.

Will I need pain medication?

Because inflammation is the cause of root canal discomfort, over the counter anti-inflammatory analgesics, such as ibuprofen (Advil) or naproxen (Aleve) are the best products to alleviate the discomfort. These medications work best if taken before pain develops, therefore, we recommend taking them before your anesthetic wears off and continuing them for 1-2 days or as directed. We recommend 400-600 mg ibuprofen (two to three Advil) taken every 6 to 8 hours during the first 48 hours after treatment. If you cannot tolerate or have been advised not to take ibuprofen, then take Tylenol instead, as directed on the bottle. You will be given a prescription for pain medication if we feel it is indicated. Narcotic medications should never be taken in combination with alcohol, antihistamines, tranquilizers, or muscle relaxers, and you should not drive while taking such medication. You can take Rx's such as Vicodin or Tylenol w/codeine in addition to taking Advil or Aleve. You should NOT take Tylenol with Vicodin or Tylenol w/codeine.

Do I need antibiotics?

In most cases, antibiotics are not required after endodontic therapy. You will be given a prescription for antibiotics if we feel it will be necessary. If you have pain or swelling that occurs several days after treatment, please call our office. We call this a “flare up” and sometime antibiotics or other medications or steps can be recommended to resolve the condition. Retreatment cases are especially prone to flare-ups of this type.

You can find answers to frequently asked questions and pain control strategies at our website:

www.endoprofessionals.com

Our answering service can take calls after business hours, and if needed, can page your doctor if you need emergency assistance before the next working day.