

YOUR GUIDE TO

Endodontic Post-Treatment Care



Specific information
regarding follow-up care
for patients who have had
endodontic treatment

YOUR GUIDE TO Endodontic Post- Treatment Care

Congratulations! By saving your tooth with root canal treatment, you have made a significant step towards better oral health. This guide is intended to answer questions you may have about the post-operative period and to give you information on how to preserve the health of your tooth following root canal treatment.

WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT FOLLOWING ENDODONTIC TREATMENT?

The root canal system inside your tooth has been thoroughly cleaned, and the irritated tissue and bacteria that caused you to need root canal treatment have been removed.

It is normal to feel some tenderness in the area over the next few days as your body undergoes the natural healing process. You may also feel some tenderness in your jaw from keeping it open for an extended period of time. These symptoms are temporary and usually respond very well to over-the-counter pain medications. It is important for you to follow the instructions on how to take these medications. Remember that narcotic medications, if prescribed, may make you drowsy and caution should be exercised in operating dangerous machinery or driving a car after taking them.

Your tooth may continue to feel slightly different from your other teeth for some time after your root canal treatment has been completed. However, if you have severe pain, contact your endodontist.

GUIDELINES FOR POST-TREATMENT CARE

- Do not eat anything or drink hot beverages until the numbness in your mouth wears off. This will prevent you from biting your cheek or tongue.
- Do not chew or bite on the treated tooth until you have had it restored by your dentist.
- Be sure to brush and floss your teeth as you normally would.
- If the opening in your tooth was restored with a temporary filling material, it is not unusual for a thin layer to wear off between appointments. However, if you think the entire filling has come out, contact your endodontist.
- Contact your endodontist right away if you develop any of the following:
 - a visible swelling inside or outside of your mouth;
 - an allergic reaction to medication, including rash, hives or itching (nausea is not an allergic reaction);
 - a return of original symptoms; or
 - your bite feels uneven.

TAKING CARE OF YOUR TOOTH

Root canal treatment is only one step in returning your tooth to full function. A proper final restoration of the tooth is extremely important in ensuring long-term success.

Contact your dentist within two weeks to arrange your next appointment. If your tooth is being treated in more than one visit by an endodontist, do not return to your dentist for the final restoration until the root canal treatment is completed.

WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS

The tooth that has had appropriate endodontic treatment followed by a proper restoration can last as long as your other natural teeth. After the tooth has been restored, you need only practice good oral hygiene, including brushing, flossing, regular checkups and cleanings.

Your dentist or endodontist may periodically x-ray the tooth to ensure that healing has occurred. Occasionally, a tooth that has undergone endodontic treatment does not heal or pain continues. At times, the tooth may become painful or diseased months or even years after successful treatment. Often when this occurs, repeating the endodontic procedure can save the tooth. Occasionally, endodontic surgery may be recommended.

WHO IS AN ENDODONTIST?

An endodontist is a dentist who specializes in saving teeth. Endodontists become specialists by completing dental school followed by an additional two or more years of advanced training in endodontics. They perform routine, as well as difficult and very complex endodontic procedures, including root canal treatment and endodontic surgery. Endodontists are valuable partners on your general dentist's team of trusted caregivers. Your dental team works together to relieve pain, save teeth and provide you with the optimal care that you deserve.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you would like further information about endodontic treatment, your endodontist will be happy to talk with you.

To find a root canal specialist in your area, ask your dentist for a referral, or contact the American Association of Endodontists directly at 800/872-3636 (North America) or 312/266-7255 (International) or info@aae.org, or visit www.aae.org.

AAE MISSION

The American Association of Endodontists is dedicated to excellence in the art and science of endodontics and to the highest standard of patient care. The Association inspires its members to pursue professional advancement and personal fulfillment through education, research, advocacy, leadership, communication and service.



American Association
of Endodontists

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