



Post – Operative Instructions for Root Canal

While you are anesthetized “frozen” and may not have feeling in the area please avoid eating or drinking anything hot as you may not feel the heat and burn yourself. Try not to chew on that side for at least 48 hours. The tooth can be sensitive to touch, biting and chewing for a few days after treatment. A tooth that has undergone a root canal should be treated just the same as any other tooth. Brush your teeth twice per day, preferably with fluoride toothpaste.

Discomfort: 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:

- Sore jaw joint from having your mouth open for a prolonged time
- Sore muscle from the injection site
- Sore gum from the rubber dam placement

Medication: We usually recommend a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medication such as ibuprofen, Advil, Motrin, or aspirin following treatment. If unable to take any anti-inflammatory then take extra strength Tylenol. See below:

- **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. Most of the time this is enough to handle the discomfort. If not, please contact our office.

Discoloration: You may notice that your treated tooth (especially a front tooth) might change color. If the tooth does not require restoring with a crown tooth whitening can be an option.

Brittleness: A non-vital tooth is more brittle than a vital one and is more susceptible to fracture. Therefore, in most cases it is recommended that your root canal tooth be crowned following treatment.

Flare-Ups: About 95% of root canals cause very little to no discomfort after the treatment is completed, however; there are about 5% of cases which can cause significant pain. These are commonly referred to as “flare-ups.” They mostly occur on badly infected that are extremely irritated or teeth that have a history of prior treatment. However, sometimes they occur randomly even on patients that have had root canals before without any problems.

If you have a flare-up you may experience moderate to severe pain, swelling, bruising, throbbing and general discomfort which can begin a few hours after treatment and could last 2 to 3 days.

Please contact the office if you experience any of these symptoms and we will do everything possible to get you some relief. You may be prescribed antibiotics, stronger pain medication, a steroid, and/or asked to come to the office to receive further therapy.