



## Root Canal Therapy

# POST OP INSTRUCTIONS

Root canals are completed in one or two appointments. We will let you know if your root canal was finished today, or if you will need a return visit.

- If you need a return visit, it is important for the success of the therapy that it is within the time frame that is recommended.
- If your root canal was not completed in the first visit, your tooth has a temporary filling in it. Be gentle with this tooth in this interval as it is quite brittle.

### Eating

You may eat when the numbness wears off (1.5-2hrs), but be very gentle with the tooth that was worked on. You may want to consider mainly chewing on the other side until your treatment is completed.

### Pain

- If you were having discomfort prior to starting the treatment, it may take a few days for the tooth to heal and be relieved.
- Your tooth may be quite sore for a few days after the appointment, this will be alleviated with time, and it may take as much as a week to ten days.
- Over the counter pain medications are very effective in controlling the tenderness. Advil or generic Ibuprofen gives the best results when two to three 200mg tablets are taken every six hours. If you are allergic to Ibuprofen or aspirin-like drugs or if they cause stomach irritation, Extra Strength Tylenol (one tablet every six hours) will also work well. With more severe pain, the combination of 600mg Ibuprofen (three over the counter tablets) plus one Extra Strength Tylenol taken every six hours has shown to be more effective than narcotic medications.

### Prescriptions

- If we have written an antibiotic prescription for you, please take the antibiotic to completion per the directions. Antibiotics have to be in your system for a specified amount of time to be successful. If you stop taking it before the prescription states, your tooth may become infected.
- If we have prescribed a narcotic pain medication (Lortab, Tylenol #3), it will aid in pain relief and will relax the body to help you sleep. The disadvantages, are that you should not take narcotics when driving or operating machinery as your reflexes may be impaired. Narcotics can also be habit forming so caution should be exercised.

### Final Step

- If your root canal was completed on a back tooth (a premolar/bicuspid tooth, or molar) and it did not already have a dental crown, it is vital to the success of your tooth to have a crown done as soon as possible.
- Teeth that have had a root canal become very brittle. Without a crown to strengthen them, they are at a high risk to fracture and break. Sometimes this can lead to the tooth needing to be extracted.
- If your tooth was badly broken prior to treatment it may need a “post and build up” placed to reinforce the tooth.

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