

Post Operative Instructions Following Root Canal Therapy

Ronald B. Baran DDS, PC

Congratulations on surviving the *dreaded root canal*. You'll be happy to know that, according to the current literature, the five year success rate for root canals is over 90%.

It's not uncommon for there to be some minor to moderate discomfort in the area after 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. This can be due to a number of factors which include soreness from the injection, soreness from placement of the rubber dam clip and from inflammation around the tip of the root.

Inflammation is a normal part of the healing process as your body rids the area around the tip of the tooth of the remains of the infected pulp tissue. Your tooth may be sensitive to biting pressure or the tooth may even feel loose. It's all the result of the inflammation and sensitivity of the nerve ending in the tissue just outside the end of the root where we cleaned, irrigated and placed filler and sealer material.

DO NOT eat or drink anything for the next half hour. DO NOT "check out" the area with your tongue or finger. You have a temporary filling in the tooth and it takes about half an hour to harden. You are also numb and may damage your tissues.

DO NOT use the tooth to bite down on anything hard (peanuts, pretzels, ice, etc.) until the permanent crown has been placed on the tooth. The tooth is prone to fracture and if you bite down on anything too hard or crunchy you may crack and ultimately lose the tooth. You will need to have the permanent crown or filling placed as soon as possible.

WHAT DO I DO IF THERE'S DISCOMFORT?

The primary line of defense against discomfort is over the counter medication. We recommend that you take 600 mg ibuprofen (three over the counter pills of Advil, Motrin or generic equivalent) every 6 hours for the next two days, OR if you are unable to take ibuprofen, 1000mg acetaminophen (two extra strength Tylenol or generic equivalent) every six to eight hours for the next two days. Most of the time this is enough to handle any discomfort.

You may also be given a prescription for an antibiotic and/or a prescription for a pain reliever. Fill the prescription for the antibiotic and begin taking the medication. Fill the prescription for the pain reliever only if you need it. It is our goal to ensure that you are comfortable.

If you have any questions or concerns I can be reached on my cell phone at

847-962-3347