

Home Care Instructions After Root Canal Treatment

By saving your tooth with root canal treatment, you have made a significant step towards better oral health. The root canal system inside your tooth has been thoroughly cleaned, shaped and sealed. You should take the following precautions to protect your tooth and ease any discomfort.

Numbness

We used a local anesthetic to thoroughly numb the area being treated. This numbness in your lips, teeth and tongue might last for several hours after the procedure. It is recommended not to eat or drink until the anesthetic (numbness) wears off to prevent accidental injury to your soft tissue.

Medications

It is normal to feel some tenderness in the root canal 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. The systems are temporary and usually respond very well to over-the-counter pain medications. Generally, 400 to 800mg Ibuprofen (i.e. two to four over-the-counter tablets of Advil, Motrin or generic ibuprofen) every six hours, is all that is needed for post-operative soreness. If you have an allergy or sensitivity to Ibuprofen or have been advised not to use it, you may take up to 1000mg of Acetaminophen (i.e. three regular Tylenol tablets or two extra-strength Tylenol tablets) every six hours.

Narcotic medications, if prescribed, may make you drowsy. Do not operate machinery or drive a car while taking these medications. If antibiotics are prescribed, continue to take them for the indicated length of time, even if symptoms or signs of infection are gone.

Routine care and precautionary measures

To further reduce pain and swelling, rinse three times a day with warm salt water (a teaspoon of salt in a cup of warm water).

- Be gentle on the tooth and avoid hard and sticky substances when eating. If possible, chew on the other side until a final restoration is placed.
- Continue to brush normally
- Flossing carefully each day pulling the floss out from the side as you floss next to the temporary. If you lift the floss out from the top, it can cause the temporary to come loose.
- Your root canal tooth may continue to feel slightly different from your teeth for some time after your root canal treatment has been completed.

Contact our office right away if you develop any of the following:

- Visible swelling inside or outside of your mouth
- Allergic reaction to medication, including rash, hives or itching (nausea is not an allergic reaction).
- Return of original systems
- Significant pain
- Bite feels high or uneven

Your permanent crown

Usually, the last step after root canal treatment is the placement of a crown on the tooth. A crown covers the tooth and protects it from breaking in the future. Any delay in obtaining a permanent restoration may cause your tooth to fracture or become reinfected.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call your main office. After office hours, you can call us at (504) 265-1304 or email us at info@geauxsmiles.com.