

INFORMED CONSENT
- ROOT CANAL TREATMENT /RE-TREATMENT OF EXISTING ROOT CANAL -

Definition of Endodontics Specialists and Root Canal Treatment

Endodontists are dental specialists with advanced training in endodontic (root canal treatment) procedures. They provide only endodontic services in their offices, and perform routine as well as difficult and very complex procedures, including endodontic surgery. Endodontists are also experienced in finding the cause of oral and facial pain that has been difficult to diagnose.

Root canal treatment requires removing the nerve and other tissues (called the pulp) from inside the tooth and its root(s), whereas retreatment involves removing the previous root canal filling material. It is done by first making an opening through the chewing surface of the tooth to gain access to the tooth's roots. The contents of the root canals are removed and the canals are cleaned and shaped. The canals are then filled and sealed with a biologically compatible material called gutta percha. After root canal treatment, a temporary filling is placed and the tooth will then require timely placement of a final restoration (permanent filling and crown), to return it to proper function.

The recommendation for treatment is based on visual and radiographic examination, as well as other diagnostic tests performed by the Endodontist. Root canal treatment is often necessary because of pain, infection, decay, broken/fractured teeth as well as other extenuating factors. The intended benefit of root canal treatment is to relieve current symptoms and/or to permit the continuation of any additional treatment the general dentist has proposed. Root canal treatment allows for the retention of the tooth and its root in the mouth, thereby permitting the tooth to be restored to function.

Treatment provided in this practice is performed in accordance with accepted clinical methods as described by both the American Association of Endodontists and the American Dental Association. This procedure will require administration of local anesthetic agents, as well as the placement of a rubber dam to maintain a clean environment during treatment. A number of radiographs will be necessary to complete the root canal procedure, and will vary depending upon the complexity of the case. Additionally, the number of office visits required to complete treatment depends upon the diagnosis and complexity of each tooth; however, routine root canal treatment can generally be completed in one or two appointments. If treatment requires further visits, a medication (Calcium Hydroxide) will be placed in the cleaned and shaped canals.

Informed Consent

I understand that root canal treatment can have a very high degree of clinical success (85-95% of routine cases are successful); however as with any branch of medicine or dentistry, no guarantee of successful treatment can be given or implied. Although clinical success of routine procedures is very high, there are certain inherent and potential risks associated with root canal treatment that can lower the final prognosis. While infrequent, such complications include but are not limited to:

- Curved canals/roots.
- Calcifications in the root canal space.
- Procedural difficulties such as the separation of instruments in the root canal space, perforation of the crown or root while locating the pulp canals, or the possibility of underfilled/overfilled canals. Teeth that have had previous root canal treatment are susceptible to having the root filling material pushed out the root end when being removed. Any of these could result in the need for oral surgery (apicoectomy, perforation repair or extraction) to address the problem.
- Fracture of the tooth's chewing surface or root, including the fracture of porcelain on a crown.
- Infection, swelling or discoloration of adjacent tissues, which in rare cases can result in hospitalization or death.
- Pain during or following treatment.
- Injury to the hard or soft tissues adjacent to the tooth.
- Sinus perforation.
- Nerve disturbances such as temporary or permanent numbness or pain of the lip tongue, chin, teeth, and/or mouth tissues.

I understand that root canal treatment may not relieve my symptoms, and that treatment may not be successful for unexplainable reasons. If treatment is unsuccessful, re-treatment, apical surgery or extraction may be necessary.

I understand that once root canal treatment is completed, I must return to my dentist in a timely manner to begin the next step in treatment. If I fail to return to my dentist to have the tooth restored, I risk a failure of the root canal treatment, decay, infection, and tooth fracture, which could result in loss of the tooth.

By checking the box that follows, you acknowledge that you read, speak and communicate English and that you have received adequate information about the proposed treatment, you understand this information, and that all your questions have been answered fully.