

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS AFTER ROOT CANAL THERAPY

Root canal therapy often takes two or more appointments to complete. A temporary filling or crown is placed to protect the tooth between appointments. After each appointment when anesthetic has been used, your lips, teeth and tongue may be numb for several hours after the appointment. Avoid any chewing until the numbness has completely worn off. Between appointments it is common (and not a problem) for a small portion of your temporary filling to wear away or break off. If the entire filling falls out, or if a temporary crown comes off, call us so that it can be replaced. It is normal to experience some discomfort for several days after a root canal appointment, especially when chewing.

To control discomfort, take pain medication as recommended. To further reduce pain and swelling, rinse three times a day with warm salt water (mix one teaspoon of salt in one cup of warm water, rinse-swish-spit). If antibiotics are prescribed, continue to take them as instructed even if all symptoms and signs of infection are gone. To protect the tooth and help keep your temporary in place, avoid eating sticky foods, especially gum, hard foods, and if possible, chew only on the opposite side of your mouth. It is important to continue to brush and floss normally. Usually, the last step after a root canal treatment is the placement of a crown on the tooth. A crown covers and protects the tooth from breaking in the future. If your bite feels uneven, if you have persistent swelling or pain, or you have any other questions or concerns, please call the office at 310.275.1399.