



Post Operative Instructions following Root Canal Therapy

First of all, congratulations, you made it through the root canal! Hopefully you had a pleasant experience, considering the circumstances. That truly is our goal. This sheet will go over some information about what to expect for the next few weeks now that the root canal is completed.

Please follow the instructions outlined below and contact us should any questions or problems arise.

1. **DO NOT** eat or drink anything for 30 minutes. **DO NOT** feel/play around your tooth with your tongue/finger for the next 4-6 hours or until numbing has gone away.
2. **You need to have a permanent filling or a crown placed on your tooth within 3 weeks of the root canal being completed.** It is essential for you to follow up with your general dentist on this. If this is not done, the tooth is very likely to fracture or to develop new decay underneath the temporary filling which may cause your root canal to fail.
3. Some minor discomfort in the area is normal following 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. The three most common reasons for pain are:
 - ❖ Sore jaw joint from having your mouth open for a prolonged time.
 - ❖ Sore muscle from the injection site.
 - ❖ Sore gum from the rubber dam placement.
4. **If you were prescribed any medications, please take them as instructed by Dr. Alonso.** If no prescriptions were given, you may be able to take 2-3 Advil or Motrin every 6 hours for the next 2 days **or** 2 Extra Strength Tylenol or generic equivalent every 6 hours for the next 2 days (as long as you do not have any allergies to these medications) for alleviation of discomfort and swelling. Do not exceed the guidelines printed on the label for any medication. If you are unable to achieve adequate pain control, please call our office.
5. **DO NOT** use the tooth to bite down on anything hard (peanuts, pretzels, ice, etc.) until the permanent filling/crown has been placed on the tooth. Again, the tooth is prone to fracture if you bite down on anything too hard or crunchy.
6. It is normal for the temporary filling to “divot” in with use. It is very rare for it to fall out entirely. If the temporary falls out you should contact us, or your general dentist as soon as possible. If it happens when our office is close, we recommend you purchase some temporary filling material from any pharmacy and place a dab in the tooth until you have an opportunity to see us at our office.
You may floss and brush your tooth as normal, unless told otherwise by Dr. Alonso.

Flare-Ups:

Although about 95% of root canals cause very little to no discomfort after the treatment is completed, there are about 5% of cases which can cause significant pain. These are commonly



referred to as “Flare-ups”. They mostly occur on badly infected teeth, teeth that are extremely irritated, or teeth that have a history of prior treatment. Sometimes, however, they occur randomly, even on patient that have had several root canals done previously without any problems.

If you have a flare-up you may experience moderate to severe pain, swelling, bruising, throbbing and general discomfort, which usually begins a few hours after treatment and may last 2 to 3 days.

Please contact our office if you experience any of these symptoms and we will do everything we possibly can to get you some relief. You may be prescribed antibiotics, stronger pain medication, a steroid and/or you may be asked to come to our office to receive treatment.

If you experience any of these symptoms outside of regular office hours Dr. Alonso can always be reached through the regular office number. Once you leave a message, he receives a notification on his cell phone and will return your call.