

About the Office

We will try to see you promptly when you arrive for your appointment, but on occasion we may be delayed in seeing you as we will be helping other patients who are also in pain and have come to our office for an emergency visit. Please be patient; we appreciate your understanding. Also, the fee for your treatment is determined by the complexity of your tooth. We will present that to you prior to the beginning of treatment. If we have overlooked telling you, please do not hesitate to ask. We will expect that the fee be paid in full prior to completion of the endodontic treatment.

Why do I need Endodontic Therapy?

Endodontic therapy is needed when your pulp (the soft tissue within the root canal) is either irritated and/or inflamed or has abscessed (become infected). The main reason that this happens is because the decay is close to the pulp or the teeth have had large fillings or crowns (caps). Occasionally, teeth need root canal therapy because they have been injured by trauma (having the teeth hit in sports injuries or accidents).

What is Endodontic Therapy?

Endodontic therapy (also called Root Canal Treatment) is a way to save your tooth, rather than having it extracted. RCT is similar to having decay removed from the crown (top) of a tooth and then having a filling placed. The difference is that we clean the inside of the tooth (the small canal that is present within the root(s) of your tooth) and then place a filling into the canal. Endodontic therapy allows you to keep your natural tooth in a healthy state rather than removing the tooth and having it replaced with a bridge or an artificial tooth.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING ENDODONTIC THERAPY?

You will be given a local anesthetic (such as Novocain) to numb your tooth, then a small opening will be made in the top of your tooth, and finally the small canals inside your roots will be cleaned with small files (used like pipe cleaners) and a cleaning solution. This procedure cleans the irritated or infected pulp tissue from the inside of your tooth. The temporary filling will then be placed in the top of your tooth. In some cases, the filling of the root canals can be done at the first visit.

WILL THE TREATMENT BE PAINFUL?

Usually, endodontic treatment is not painful. However, if your tooth is sore or hurts when you come in for an emergency visit, there is a slight chance that your tooth will be somewhat more difficult to numb. We will work with you and make every effort to provide for your comfort and well being. We have the means to control pain and discomfort; therefore you need not be apprehensive or nervous.

IS MY TOOTH DEAD?

No! Although your tooth cannot feel cold or hot, the tissue that surrounds your tooth and holds it in the bone is alive and well. This tissue is not affected by endodontic treatment. Therefore, your tooth can live without the pulp and is far from being dead.

WHAT IS THE SUCCESS OF ENDODONTIC THERAPY?

Studies have shown modern therapy to be successful in over 95% of the teeth treated. Sometimes, difficulties may be seen in your tooth and additional procedures may be needed to help your body heal the tooth.

WHAT TO DO AFTER THE COMPLETION OF MY ROOT CANAL

Endodontic therapy sometimes causes the bone at the end of the tooth to be bruised. This may cause your tooth to be sore for a few days, especially to touching and biting. Therefore, do not chew hard foods with that tooth.

In some cases, the bone around the end of the tooth is infected. Germs present within the root canal cause this. Although we have cleaned the root canal, the infection in the bone may still be present. In most cases your body's immune system is able to heal the infection without the use of antibiotics. In some instances, we may prescribe antibiotics if we feel it is necessary. If you have been given pain or antibiotic prescriptions, please have them filled and take as directed. If you have any unusual problems, such as severe pain or swelling, please call. The infection within your tooth has been eliminated and the root canals have been sealed to prevent reinfection. Since the outer surface of your tooth is filled with a "temporary", it is important that you contact your dentist so that he or she may restore the crown of your tooth with a permanent filling or crown (cap). This is necessary to give the tooth additional protection, so it will not break or fracture.