

ROOT CANAL THERAPY

*Your Dentist has advised root canal therapy for your tooth.
This a means of ensuring you keep your tooth.*

What Is It?

Root Canal Therapy is a way of treating teeth whose nerves have died – it is a way of treating problems such as toothache and abscesses.

Why Do I Need Root Canal Therapy?

Your tooth has been damaged by decay, fracture or wear, which has caused the nerve inside (called the 'pulp') to become inflamed and die. This may be causing a toothache, or may have produced an 'abscess' in the jawbone near the tooth's root (an abscess is an infection in the jawbone). By removing this dead nerve, we can return the tooth and jawbone to good health.

This means:

- your toothache will be cured
- you will keep your tooth, meaning that chewing, speaking and your appearance won't be affected

What If I Don't Have This Treatment?

Your body cannot remove the dead pulp, so your toothache or abscess won't disappear. This can eventually lead to loss of the tooth. It can also result in very serious, even dangerous infections. The only alternative to root canal therapy is removal of your tooth.

Will the Treatment Hurt?

Root canal therapy seems to have a lot of bad publicity! In reality, any treatment your dentist does should be quite comfortable for you. We take extra care during root canal treatment to ensure that you'll be very comfortable throughout the treatment. We also take steps to ensure you are comfortable after treatment visits.

What Is Involved?

Root canal treatment involves removing the dead pulp, and disinfecting any bacteria which have entered the tooth. This is usually done in two stages. At the first visit, the tooth is completely numbed, any decay is cleaned away, and the dead pulp is carefully and thoroughly removed. Antiseptic rinses are used to wash the tooth as it is cleaned, and antiseptic paste is sealed inside the tooth at the end of this first visit. Your tooth should become quite comfortable very soon after this stage – usually straight away.

During the second stage of treatment (usually 2 weeks later), the antiseptic paste is washed out of the tooth and the area which contained the dead pulp is sealed with a special filling material. In many cases, your dentist will then place a permanent filling in the tooth at this same visit.

How Long Will this Treatment Last?

This is a quite complex form of dental treatment, which makes it hard to accurately predict the likelihood of permanent treatment success. We use the best methods & materials to ensure the best possible results, and we're careful to not recommend root canal therapy where it is not likely to work. In reality, permanent success can never be guaranteed for any medical or dental treatment. However, we find that you will achieve a stable result in about 70% of cases. It is our aim to achieve results like this for your tooth.

Will I Have Any Problems?

One of our main concerns is to protect root canal treated teeth from breakage – often these teeth will have large fillings, and are quite fragile. Your dentist may therefore recommend that a 'crown' be placed over the tooth, to strengthen (and beautify) it. We want to ensure you keep this tooth for as long as possible – hopefully forever.

Any Other Questions?

Your Dentist is always available to discuss any questions you have about any aspect of your dental care. We look forward to working with you, to keep your smile in great condition.