

Post-Operative Instructions & Expectations

Following Root Canal Therapy

Pain and Discomfort Management:

It is normal to experience some discomfort following a root canal, particularly during the first few days after treatment. The level of discomfort varies depending on the complexity of the procedure and the condition of the tooth.

- **Pain Relief:** Over-the-counter pain medications are typically sufficient to manage mild to moderate discomfort.
 - **Moderate pain:** 400 mg ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®) and 325–500 mg acetaminophen (Tylenol®) taken together.
 - **Severe pain:** 600 mg ibuprofen and 650–1,000 mg acetaminophen taken together.
 - If your discomfort becomes more intense or does not improve after a few days, please contact our office.
- **Swelling:** Mild swelling around the treated area is common. Applying a cold compress to the outside of your cheek for 15–20 minutes at a time during the first 24 hours can help reduce swelling and discomfort.

Managing Numbness:

Local anesthesia is used during your procedure, and numbness may last for several hours afterward.

- Avoid chewing or biting your cheek, tongue, or lip until the numbness has completely worn off to prevent accidental injury.

Temporary Filling Care:

- The temporary filling is placed to protect the tooth until it can be restored with a permanent restoration by your general dentist.
- Because the material is soft, it may feel uneven or as though it has changed shape. It is unlikely that the filling has completely fallen out, even if it feels that way.
- If you are unsure whether the filling is intact, keep the area as clean as possible and contact your general dentist to have the tooth restored promptly.
- Ideally, the tooth should receive a permanent restoration within one month of the root canal to prevent contamination of the treated canals.

Temporary Post-Treatment Sensitivity:

It is common to experience mild to moderate tenderness around the treated tooth, especially when chewing or touching the area. This sensitivity is part of the normal healing process and should gradually improve over a few days. If pain becomes severe or worsens after several days, please contact our office.

What to Expect in the Days Following Treatment:

Most patients begin to feel better within a few days, with discomfort steadily improving. Some tenderness may persist for up to a week, particularly when chewing. If symptoms persist beyond two weeks or worsen at any point, please reach out to us.

When to Contact Our Office:

Please contact us if you experience any of the following:

- Severe pain not relieved by over-the-counter medications
- Persistent or worsening swelling
- Fever or signs of infection
- Any unusual or concerning changes in symptoms