

Self-Care Following a Root Canal Procedure

How long before I can chew again?

We used a local anesthetic to thoroughly numb the area we treated. This numbness in your lips, teeth, cheek, and tongue might last for several hours after the procedure. To avoid damage to these tissues, we advise that you should avoid any chewing until the numbness has completely worn off.

What if my tooth hurts?

For the first few days after your root canal therapy, it is common to have some discomfort or sensitivity in the tooth that was treated, particularly if there was pain and infection prior to the treatment. If antibiotics have been prescribed for the infection, it's important that you take them for the full length of time indicated on the prescription, even if all signs of infection are gone.

To control discomfort, we recommend that you take an over-the-counter pain reliever, following label directions. If prescription pain medication was prescribed, take as needed, only if over-the-counter pain relievers are not working. To further reduce pain and swelling, you can rinse three times a day with warm salt water. Dissolve a teaspoon of salt in a cup of warm water, and then gently swish the water around the tooth and spit.

Caring for your temporary crown or filling

The temporary filling or crown was placed to protect your teeth while your custom restoration is being created in a dental lab. It's common for a small portion of a temporary filling to wear away, break off, or become completely dislodged. This usually is not a problem or an emergency. Remember, it is only a temporary. However, you should take these precautions to ensure that your temporary filling or crown stays securely in place:

- Allow the temporary cement/ filling to set up for 1-2 hours before eating, etc.
- Avoid chewing gum and eating sticky or hard foods.
- Continue to brush normally
- Floss carefully each day, pulling the floss out from the side as you floss next to the temporary. Lifting the floss out from the top can cause the temporary to come loose.
- When possible, chew only on the opposite side of your mouth.

If your bite feels uneven or uncomfortable, let us know so we can adjust it. It is possible for a tooth to become sore or extremely sensitive as a result of an uneven bite.

If the soreness or sensitivity lasts for more than 3 weeks, please call our office. If you have any questions or concerns not addressed, be sure to give us a call.