

ROOT CANAL TREATMENT

A Root Canal treatment involves filling the inside of your tooth to prevent bacteria from growing in it. Each tooth has a space within it that contains blood vessels and nerve tissues that supply the tooth.

A Root Canal treatment needs to be done if this tissue becomes infected, inflamed, or has severe swelling.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What material is used in a Root Canal Treatment?

Root canals must be very well shaped, cleaned and filled to ensure the tooth remains free from infection. This is achieved by using:

- Metal files to widen and shape the root canals
- A bleach solution to clean the root canals
- A natural rubber material called Gutta Percha to fill the root canals
- An antibacterial cement or “sealer” to coat the Gutta Percha and prevent bacteria from re-infecting the root canal

2. What are the benefits of a Root Canal Treatment?

Root Canal treatments eliminate the pain and infection from your tooth and allow the area to remain healthy and the tooth to remain in place. When the inside of a tooth has become infected from bacteria or severely swollen from trauma, a Root Canal treatment is the only way to save the tooth.

3. What are the risks of a Root Canal Treatment?

As with any dental treatment, some inherent risks exist in having a root canal treatment.

Up to 10% of root canal treated teeth may experience continuing pain and infection from the following:

- Nerve tissue remaining in the canal space
- Gutta Percha and sealer failing to completely fill the canal space
- An existing root fracture that was undetectable when the root canal treatment was done; in this case the tooth will not settle and must be extracted

**A Root Canal treated tooth is at significantly higher risk of fracturing than the same tooth without a Root Canal treatment. A crown or onlay that protects the tooth from breaking is highly recommended after the root canal is done.

4. What are the alternatives to having a Root Canal Treatment?

The only alternative to a Root Canal treatment is to extract the tooth. If the nerve of a tooth is irreversibly damaged or dead, the body will not heal the tooth. While symptoms may initially resolve, infection or pain will always recur.

5. Are there any considerations after having a Root Canal Treatment?

A temporary filling may be placed over a root canal treatment while the tooth is settling down and the area around the root is healing.

The temporary **MUST** be replaced with a permanent restoration as soon as possible to prevent it from wearing down and allowing bacteria in your mouth to infect the root canal filling.

