



Root canal treatment is a complex dental procedure designed to attempt to salvage a tooth or the root of a tooth. Root canal treatment may be indicated when: -

- 1) There is pain as a result of bacterial infection of the tooth.
- 2) Due to nerve damage in the tooth due to a traumatic bite.
- 3) Damage to the tooth as a result of external trauma.
- 4) As elective treatment which may be part of a bigger treatment plan.
- 5) Or maybe required as a re-canal treatment.

The tooth may act as a reservoir of bacteria in the mouth which can result in an abscess and possibly even pathology like cysts if left untreated.

The alternative to this treatment is to consider an extraction of the tooth and then replacement with either:

- 1) Dental implants.
- 2) Denture.
- 3) Bridge.
- 4) Or even leave this place if you have a stable bite.

As Root Canal Treatment is a complex dental procedure and there are Specialists (Endodontists) available that can carry this treatment out for you. They work on a fully private basis and their charges vary from clinician to clinician. If you wish to have the treatment completed by a Specialist, then your dentist can arrange a referral to a local endodontist as soon as possible.

Procedure

After administering local anaesthetic to the problematic tooth, access is gained to the root canal system of the tooth.

Once all the canals are visibly located (the number of canals may vary from tooth to tooth), then all the canals will be prepared with special endodontic files with a dentist progressively working his way down to the tip of the tooth. To check the whole length of the tooth has been reached a radiograph will be required. The dentist may need to use several different sized files to prepare each canal and when at the apex, the canal will be disinfected with sodium hypochlorite and/or chlorhexidine. (If you have any known allergies to the above products then please inform the dentist prior to the treatment being started).

The canals are then filled with a root filling to seal all the gaps and prevent bacteria from harboring.

Long-standing infections or very inflamed nerves may require treatment to be completed over two or more appointments, with antibacterial medication placed inside canal systems between appointments.

After treatment

During the treatment or immediately after treatment you may experience one or more of the following: -

- a) Some pain and discomfort around the tooth that has been treated as soon as the anaesthetic wears off. This can normally be controlled with pain killers. Also, restricted mouth opening (trismus) or jaw muscle spasm which occurs infrequently and usually lasts for several days but may last longer.

- b) In a few number of patients, you may get of swelling on the side of the tooth or face which normally appears within the first 24 hours after treatment. This is known as a **Phoenix abscess** and is a recognized side-effect of treatment. If this happens please return to the surgery as you may require a course of antibiotics or further treatment.
- c) During the treatment, there is the possibility of instrument separation within the root canals, perforations (extra openings), damage to bridges, existing fillings, crowns or porcelain veneers, missed canals, loss of tooth structure in gaining access to canals, and fractured teeth. You may require other treatment at additional charges to you and/or a referral to an endodontist.

It is important that you understand there are many limitations to root canal treatment. Some of these include: -

- 1) There is a variable internal anatomy within the root canal system. This means that they may be more canals in the tooth than expected, and sometimes all of these are not visible. They may harbor bacteria which may cause a reinfection in the future. Your dentist will make every effort to locate all the canals and prepare them fully.
- 2) Furthermore, after root canal treatment is completed, there sometimes there is not enough tooth structure left to support a permanent restoration. In this case the dentist will recommend from the offset, that you consider having the tooth taken out and not wasting your time with a root canal procedure.

Any tooth that has had root canal treatment is now susceptible to fracture and therefore the recommended treatment after root canal is to have some sort of cuspal protection put on the tooth. This may be in the form of a Crown or Onlay, and this should be done as soon as possible after the treatment.

However, sometimes your dentist may wait for some time to be sure that the root canal treatment is stable before a permanent restoration is placed. During this interim period, a filling can be placed in the tooth and the cusps can be taken out of occlusion to reduce the risk of tooth fracture.

If you have any further question regarding this treatment then please speak to your dentist immediately. You will have the ability to withdraw consent treatment at any point and abandon treatment.

Patient declaration

Root Canal Treatment has been explained to me fully and I have had the opportunity to think about all the risks, benefits, alternatives and the cost of this treatment. I have read this consent form in my own time and I am happy to progress with the treatment.

No guarantee can be given to you by anyone that the proposed treatment or surgery will cure or improve the condition(s) permanently.

Patient's signature:

Patient's Name:

Date: